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The Breviary: Its History
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THE BREVIARY

ITS HISTORY AND CONTENTS

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IV

THE BREVIARY

ITS HISTORY AND CONTENTS

BY

DOM BAUDOT, O.S.B.

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PREFACE

THE Breviary, which is the object of this study, is the book containing the prayer of the Catholic Church: it is the body of praise, adoration and thanksgiving daily sent up to God in the name of all mankind by priests, monks and nuns, who are bound either by their ordination, or by their vows and rule to fulfil this duty. For them as for their brethren whom they represent, this prayer is of the utmost importance; it is for individuals and for society a source of light and supernatural life. The faithful, whenever they join in this official prayer, foster and promote the habit of prayer; moreover, amid their daily occupations, they can assure themselves that the Church, in the person of her ministers, is interested in their salvation.

Twenty years ago, I published a fascicule in the series *Science et Religion* entitled: *Le Bréviaire romain, ses origines, son histoire* (in-12, Paris, 1907); the book, which is now out of print, was translated into English and Italian. It was at this time that the laity were beginning to take an interest in liturgical matters, and I thought that a concise summary of two lengthy works on the same subject would be welcomed. These two books, which had appeared a few years earlier, were the *Histoire du Bréviaire romain*, by P. Batiffol, an English translation of which was published in 1898, and the work

of a German Benedictine, Dom Suitbert Bäumer, translated into French by Dom Reginald Biron under the title: *Histoire du Bréviaire*, 2 vols. in-8o, Paris, 1905. Although they disagreed on a few points of detail, these writers made a valuable contribution to the history of the Breviary and its successive transformations. In the third edition of his book, published in 1911, Pierre Batiffol, now a Monsignore, came round more to his opponent's way of thinking in the matter of St. Gregory's rôle in the compilation of the Divine Office, a fact which has obliged me to revise some pages in my earlier book. But a still more important alteration has now become necessary, for since 1912 another chapter has been added to the history of the Breviary. This is the reform carried out by Pius X: starting from the principle that the longer psalms could be divided, as St. Benedict had done in his Rule, but applying the principle much more widely, the Sovereign Pontiff made a new distribution of the psalter between the days of the week, in order better to balance the amount for each day and to ensure the whole one hundred and fifty psalms being recited every week. Consequently, the summary which forms the first part of the present book had to be completed on this point.

On the other hand, however, I thought it necessary further to compress it in order to add a second part to the present book and to consider the contents of the Breviary at the present time. The account of the different parts of the Breviary taken both in themselves and in their relation to the daily and annual *cursus*, seemed to me a fitting conclusion to the history of their origin: this account will enlighten the reader as to future

reforms, for that of Pius X was only a beginning, and will open his eyes to the close connexion which exists between the public celebration of the Divine Office and the daily offering of the holy sacrifice of the Mass. I should have liked to have developed this account more at length, and I am aware that there are lacunæ which could not be filled in the limited number of pages: I have consistently sought to inspire all my readers with the utmost respect and reverence for the offices of the Roman Breviary, in which Newman, while still a Protestant, discovered "such surpassing merit and beauty." In later years, after his conversion, he used to say that when Froude left him his Breviary, he read it frequently, and its daily recitation opened out to him a new road.

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THE HISTORY OF THE BREVIARY

THE BREVIARY

CHAPTER I

THE GROWTH OF THE ROMAN OFFICE FROM ITS GENESIS TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY

I. The origin of cycles in the office in the Eastern Church from the first to the sixth century. II. The selection and execution of the forms of public prayer in the Western Church, especially in the Roman basilicas and monasteries. III. The Roman Office from Charlemagne to the end of the twelfth century.

Some preliminary explanations are here necessary in order that the reader may understand the content and division of this chapter. Both in the West and in the East, from the earliest ages of the Church down to the end of the twelfth century, the Divine Office was always celebrated publicly; it was never recited privately, except quite at the beginning, in the case of some of the day hours, as we shall explain later. This official prayer, with the succession of formulæ which go to make up the office to-day, was only gradually formed in course of centuries: the Church had first to appoint certain times for it during the day and night. Thus, in order to put into practice the Gospel precept: *Ye ought always to pray and not to faint*, special times

were set aside, which have been given the name of Hours, a term consecrated by custom and which is sometimes used to designate the Breviary or one of its parts. The succession of these hours has been divided into sections which, as they normally recur every day in the same order, have been given the name of Cycle; there is the nocturnal cycle, comprising the hours of prayer during the night, and the diurnal cycle, or day hours. Since the latter have not all the same origin, we make a distinction, in the diurnal cycle, between the cycle of tierce, sext and none, and the cycle of prime and compline. An account of the formation of these cycles is the subject of the first section: it will be seen that the actual formulæ used at these hours have not yet been clearly ascertained. One of the first things the Church did was to gather all the faithful together to celebrate the Divine Office, or at any rate the night vigils, on Sundays and the anniversaries of martyrs: there was no question then of anything beyond the nocturnal cycle, which went by the name of vigil. As time passed, practices peculiar to the monks were adopted by the faithful in their meetings: it was thus that the diurnal cycle was introduced, first that of tierce, sext and none, and later that of prime and compline. All this originated in the Eastern Church, between the first and the sixth centuries.

The Western Church, however, began to celebrate the vigil office as early as the fourth century, or even earlier; it also adopted the different cycles of which we have spoken: an attempt was made to fix the number and variety of the forms of prayer, and to arrange the manner of recitation so that all who were present might take an active part in the

office. Customs varied in the different Churches: the Church of Milan, for instance, at the time of St. Ambrose, seemed to have more affinity with the Eastern practice. The Church of Rome adapted the office for the use of its clergy, the members of which were attached to the basilicas, the cemeteries, or the deaconries. When at a later date the help of the monks was sought, the Roman Church had to admit some of their customs. Of the interpenetration of these various usages was born the Roman Office as we find it in the eighth century, in the time of Charlemagne. The formation of that office is set forth in the second section of this chapter.

By the time of Charlemagne, the various parts which go to make up the different hours had been definitely fixed: we shall see that after St. Gregory the Great, who had a large share in it, the Roman practice spread to all the different countries of Europe, especially to Gaul, England and Germany, owing to the influence of the monks: moreover, the least details of the hours of the Divine Office were fixed. The whole year was divided into different sections like the day; then arose the distinction between the common and proper office of the time or *Temporale*, and the common and proper office of the saints or *Sanctorale*. Here again monastic customs were combined with the practice of the Roman basilicas, and it may be said that down to the end of the twelfth century the Breviary was still in process of formation: the third section gives some account of the organization of the office throughout the year, from Charlemagne down to the end of the twelfth century.

I. The Origin of Cycles in the Office in the Eastern Church from the First to the Sixth Century

Like everything else in the Church of God, the process of formation was slow. It was at Jerusalem, immediately after Pentecost, that the genesis of the hours of office began. The public prayer of the Jews in the Temple took place at fixed times each day. We read in Acts iii. 1, that the Apostles used punctually to attend these services. The Jews of the dispersion, scattered throughout the various cities of the great Roman Empire, observed the same hours in their synagogues: at their meetings, morning and evening, they sang psalms, read and commented the Scriptures. When he first began to preach, St. Paul attended these meetings and preached the Gospel at them: the obduracy of his former co-religionists soon caused him to desist, and to hold his meetings in the house of some new convert (Acts xvii. 7). It is now admitted that about the year 65, when the Christians finally broke away from the Jews of the synagogue, the leaders of the various Churches appointed a time, distinct from the liturgy of the Mass, for the official prayer: since it was said at dawn, this hour was given the name of Matins or morning prayer: later it was called Lauds, on account of the praises, or lauds, which formed its main theme. This was the morning prayer. In the evening, at nightfall, there was a similar official meeting which was given the name of Vespers. At this hour psalms were sung, the Scriptures read; the president of the assembly recited

the *Pater*, that wonderful summary of all we can ask of God, and added a formula of his own composition which he altered to suit the occasion. On certain days, and especially during the night between Saturday and Sunday, this meeting was prolonged: all kept watch to commemorate with chant and lesson the Lord's Resurrection: this was the Sunday vigil,[1] enshrined between vespers and lauds. Thus the nocturnal cycle originated. It assumed special importance on Easter Day, the anniversary of the Resurrection. Later on it became the custom to celebrate in the same way the birthday of the Saviour, on January 6 in the East, and on December 25 in the West; a combination of the two uses soon led to the two feasts being kept throughout the Church: the feast of the Ascension, and perhaps that of Pentecost, followed close upon them. A decree of the Emperor Constantine given by Eusebius[2] bade the prefects of provinces enforce the observance of these feasts, as well as those of the martyrs and what he calls the *holy times*. Besides these meetings, they had to recite certain prayers at home: the *Didache* or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*,[3] written probably between A.D. 80 and 100, recommended the recitation of the *Pater* thrice daily; a little later, it became the custom to sanctify by private prayer the principal hours of the day, tierce, sext and none.

It is difficult to say what formulæ were used

[1] On this typical vigil, see Duchesne, *Origines du culte chrétien*, Paris, 1898, p. 219, English translation by M. L. McClure, *Christian Worship*, London, 1903.

[2] *Vita Constantini*, II, 40.

[3] E. Jacquier, *La doctrine des douze Apôtres*, Paris, 1891.

at these hours either at public or private prayer: a document attributed to Eusebius gives a list of psalms for the day and for the night: at lauds, psalms lx, cxl and cxli; at vespers, psalms cxxix, cxl and xii (or cxii); for private use, one psalm at each hour, or twenty-four in all. Hymns or rhythmic chants also made their appearance, especially at vespers; the Byzantine rite has retained one of these compositions at the vesper office, known as the *Lumen hilare*.

The fourth century saw the building of the splendid basilicas of Constantine, the *Dominicum* at Alexandria, the *Anastasis* at Jerusalem, the *Holy Apostles* at Constantinople. The Divine Office was to be solemnized in these basilicas, but the laity could not be expected to fulfil that duty. The Christian community had increased in numbers but not in fervour: to the great sorrow of their pastors, some even neglected the liturgical meeting on Sunday. The more fervent then drew together; they were men and women who, though living in the world, bound themselves by a public profession to observe chastity all their life, to fast throughout the week, and to spend their days in prayer. These ascetics and virgins were in Syria called *monazontes* and *parthenai*, and constituted a third order, a link between the clergy and laity. As early as the first half of the fourth century they were to be found in the great churches of the East, in Jerusalem, Alexandria, Antioch and Edessa. They celebrated the daily vigils according to certain rules; St. John Chrysostom and the author of the treatise *de Virginitate*[1] says that the ascetics and virgins devote themselves to psalmody at cock-crow and

[1] Pseudo-Athanasius, P.G. XXVII.

again at the third, sixth and ninth hour, as also at vespers, the hour of the *lucernarium*. The *Apostolic Constitutions* also attest the existence in Syria of public prayer every morning at cock-crow (psalm lxii), and every evening at sunset (psalm cxl). At Jerusalem the daily office assumed greater importance; the diary of Etheria, a Spanish pilgrim who visited the Holy Land between the years 385-388, gives a full description of this office: "At the tenth hour, which we here call *licinicon*, and we at home call the *lucernarium*, the people crowd into the Anastasis. All the candles are lit, and they chant the vesper psalms with long antiphons. At the appointed time the bishop comes and seats himself on his lofty throne, with the priests around him. When the chanting of the psalms and antiphons is finished, the bishop rises and stands in front of the balustrade, while a deacon reads the commemorations, and the children, of whom there are a great many, answer *Kyrie eleison*, after each name. The bishop says the prayer for all, in which all the faithful and the catechumens unite. Then the bishop says the prayer for the catechumens, during which the latter bow their heads; lastly, the bishop says the prayer for all the faithful. So the office ends; everyone departs after kissing the bishop's hand. . . . Every day before cock-crow, the doors of the Anastasis are opened, and the *monazontes* and *parthenai* enter, together with those of the faithful who wish to keep the vigil. They sing psalms, and at the end of each psalm the priests and deacons say a prayer. At daybreak they begin the morning psalms; the bishop now arrives, and the service continues as at vespers." [1] We see from this account

[1] *Sylviæ Aquitaniæ peregrinatio ad loca sancta*, ed.

that the vigil office consisted of psalms followed by prayers; Cassian gives the same order for the monasteries in Egypt, where the psalms were twelve in number. There was a similar meeting at sext and none: the *Peregrinatio* does not mention tierce.

This daily office was combined with the Sunday vigil in the following manner: "The crowd then gathers in front of the Anastasis; psalms are sung, each psalm being followed by a prayer said by a priest or by a deacon. It is the custom that the doors of the basilica should not be opened before cock-crow. But as soon as this is heard, the bishop arrives, the doors are opened, a great number of lights are lit; a priest says a psalm, to which the congregation respond; after the psalm there is a prayer; a deacon says a second psalm, a cleric a third, each being followed by a prayer. Then follows the commemoration of those to be prayed for, as at vespers. Next the censers are brought in, and the basilica is filled with their fragrance. At this point the bishop takes the gospel-book and reads from it, after which he blesses the faithful and the office is over. The bishop retires and the congregation disperses. But the *monazontes* remain in the basilica to sing psalms until daybreak, each psalm being followed by a prayer said by some priest or deacon." We have here two liturgies

Geyer, *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, Vienna, 1898. Various monographs have been published, namely: Dom F. Cabrol, *Les églises de Jérusalem, la discipline et la liturgie au IVe siècle*, Paris, 1895; Kohler, articles in the *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, Vol. XLV; Dom M. Ferotin, *Le véritable auteur de la Peregrinatio Sylviæ*, in the *Rev. Quest. hist.*, 1903, Vol. LXXIV, p. 367, etc.

superposed, that of the body of the faithful, and that of the ascetics and virgins. The description gives us an idea of the solemnity with which the night office was celebrated in Jerusalem.

The office was the same among the monks of Palestine. Certain changes were made in it by different Churches. The antiphonal chanting of the psalms, in which the congregation, divided into two choirs, took an active part, was introduced into the Church of Antioch by Diodorus; St. Basil, writing in 375, says that it was used in Egypt, in Palestine, in Syria and in the valley of the Euphrates.[1] About the year 382, there originated in the monasteries of Bethlehem a service which was the origin of prime.[2] The monks used after lauds to take some rest, but as they made this concession to their weakness an excuse to sleep on until tierce, this relaxation was remedied by appointing for sunrise an office of three psalms similar to that of the day hours, to which later a prayer before work was added. Finally, St. Basil in his *Longer Rules*, art. 375, mentions a prayer before going to bed, in which psalm xc was recited. This strictly local practice may be looked upon as the nucleus of the hour to which St. Benedict was to give the name of compline. Thus the nocturnal and the diurnal cycles each took shape in the East.

The brief account given above enables us to follow the early development of the hours of the Divine Office in the Eastern Churches. With the intention of putting the faithful in mind of the Resurrection

[1] Vasson, *Saint Basile-le-Grand, ses œuvres oratoire et ascétiques*, Paris, 1894.

[2] J. Pargoire, *Prime et complies*, in the *Revue d'Histoire et de Littérature religieuses*, Vol. IV, p. 281.

and to prepare them for Christ's second coming, the ancient vigil was established, that is to say, the office of vespers, the night vigil and lauds of Sunday; the celebration of this office was extended to the anniversaries of the martyrs. In the fourth century, the ascetics and virgins caused it to become of daily observance. In order to honour God throughout the day, tierce, sext and none were established, offices which originally were peculiar to monks; the conditions of the cenobitical life gave rise to the two offices of prime and compline. The portions due to the primitive Church and to monasticism were destined to remain separate until the sixth century.

II. The Selection and Execution of the Forms of Public Prayer in the Western Church, Especially in the Roman Basilicas and Monasteries

The liturgical customs of the East found their way into the Western Church about the fourth century or even a little earlier. In 360, St. Hilary of Poitiers[1] noted that the Church of Gaul celebrated vespers and lauds with much assiduity, and he implies that vigils were also kept on certain days. We know from St. Jerome and St. Isidore that Hilary composed hymns for the office; when an exile in the East, he had seen how popular the

[1] On St. Hilary as a hymn-writer, see Gamurrini, *S. Hilarii tractatus de mysteriis et hymnis*, Rome, 1897; Dom Parisot, *Hymnographie poitevine*, in *Le pays poitevin*, March, 1889.

singing of hymns was in the Greek and Syriac-speaking Churches. At Milan, St. Ambrose, after his consecration as bishop in 374, introduced into his Church the Eastern custom of daily vigils, and had the psalms sung antiphonally, as in the East; he also composed some hymns. The use of Milan was soon to extend to the whole of Italy.

Little or no light is thrown on the history of the canonical hours at Rome until the end of the fourth century. In order to realize the various stages in this history, we must know something of the organization of the Roman Church at this period.[1] There were four different classes of churches, namely: the churches afterwards known as the patriarchal basilicas, St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, Holy Cross in Jerusalem, St. Peter on the Vatican, St. Paul outside the Walls, St. Laurence, St. Sebastian; these were to Rome what the " great churches " were to Antioch and Alexandria, while the others, those in the suburbs, were the sanctuaries which enshrined the great Roman martyrs. Next, there were the *tituli*, or parish churches, of which there seem to have been as many as twenty-five so early as the beginning of the fourth century; these parish churches, with a priest in charge, provided the necessary rites of baptism, penance and burial. In the third place, there were the deaconries; Rome was divided into seven ecclesiastical districts, each with a deacon over it, who administered a sort of charitable institution. Lastly, there were the churches in the suburban cemeteries, served by the clergy of the *tituli*. So that there were at Rome

[1] On the distribution of the Roman clergy in the fourth century, see Duchesne, *Liber pontificalis*, Vol. I, pp. 164 and 364; Mabillon, *Musæum italicum*, Vol. II, p. 11.

the clergy of the *tituli* and the clergy of the *regiones* or districts, and the duty of celebrating the Divine Office devolved upon both. Up to the beginning of the fifth century the Roman clergy had still resisted all monastic influence; they were conservative and proved it when an attempt was made to introduce the psalter as corrected by St. Jerome in 383. Antiphonal psalmody seems to have been introduced into Rome by Pope St. Celestin I (422-432). St. Jerome tells us that the solemn vigils on Sundays and station-days were celebrated sometimes in one church, sometimes in another; on account of the crowds, there was often deplorable disorder, and St. Jerome advises Laeta not to allow her daughter to go without her.[1] The hours of tierce, sext and none were observed by these Roman ladies in the seclusion of their houses. Daily vigils were not celebrated in Rome until some time in the fifth century: there is an indirect allusion to this practice in Chapter XIII of the *Rule* of St. Benedict. These vigils were celebrated in each *titulus* by the clergy attached to it, and only those of the laity who felt so disposed were present. The scheme of these vigils is given in the *Liber diurnus*,[2] a seventh-century document. "At all times of the year every day, from cock-crow to sunrise, all the clergy, with the bishop at their head, assembled at the church to celebrate the vigils. On every Sunday of the year, these vigils comprised psalmody with antiphons, nine lessons and their responsories. Every day there was psalmody with antiphons, lessons and responsories which varied in number according to

[1] *Epist.*, CVII, 9.
[2] Ed. Th. Sickel, Vienna, 1889.

the season: three lessons from Easter to September 24, four lessons from then until Easter." Although the *Liber diurnus* does not mention the office of lauds, we know from the *Rule* of St. Benedict that it formed part of the Roman use; probably it was linked on to the vigil office. Nor is there any mention of the office of vespers, for the *Liber diurnus* treats this office as part of the night office, and as a matter of fact, vespers were called the first watch or *lucernarium*. It was St. Benedict who put this office among the day hours. (*Regula*, Chapter XLI.)

The distribution of the psalter between the different hours does not seem to have been considered until the fourth century; but early in the fifth, it was probably found necessary to take steps to do so. The Church of Rome took the initiative, so we gather from St. Benedict, for he alludes to it in his rules for the distribution of the psalter. A comparison between the two psalters, the Roman and the Benedictine, will enable us to realize the process followed. On the principle that the whole psalter ought to be recited in the course of the week, the series of psalms from i to cviii was set aside for the night office, with a few exceptions; psalms cix to cxlvii were assigned to vespers, and psalms cxlviii to cl were reserved for the end of lauds, which took its name from them, in place of its former title of matins, *matutinæ laudes*. For this hour a certain number of psalms especially suited to it were deducted from the first two series; these were psalms l, the *Miserere*, xcii, xcix, lxii, lxvi for lauds on Sunday, and psalms v, xlii, lxiv, lxxxix, cxlii, xci for lauds on weekdays. In the Roman psalter, psalm cxviii was set aside for the day hours,

prime, tierce, sext and none; at prime, to the first four octonaries of psalm cxviii was added psalm liii, which originally appeared every day, and one of the following psalms each day except Saturday, namely, cxvii, xxiii, xxiv, xxv, xxii, xxi. Compline always had the same psalms, namely, psalm iv, six verses of psalm xxx, psalms xc and cxxxiii. In the Roman night office, after deducting the psalms we have mentioned, the series of psalms from i to cviii was taken in order, at the rate of eighteen for Sunday (i to xx, leaving out psalms iv and v) and twelve for each of the other days of the week. This led to a marked disproportion between the different days in the Roman office, for the psalms were not divided, except the cxviiith. St. Benedict avoided this difficulty and made the days balance by dividing the longer psalms into two parts: in the Benedictine office each day always had twelve psalms in two nocturns, the third nocturn on Sundays and festivals being composed of canticles taken from the Old Testament. The series began with psalm xx, the first nineteen psalms being reserved for the office of prime, which has three different psalms every day. In order to secure greater variety at the little hours, St. Benedict assigned psalm cxviii to the little hours, on Sunday and Monday, and for the other days of the week chose the gradual psalms cxix to cxxvii, which are very short. For lauds every day, he took the same canticle as the Church of Rome, but instead of saying the psalms lxii and lxvi under the same *Gloria*, he selected for each day of the week a different psalm which alluded either to sunrise or to the Resurrection. To vespers every day St. Benedict assigned four psalms only instead of five. At the present time, even after the reform

of Pius X, the Benedictines have retained their psalter, distributed according to the prescriptions of their rule. The Roman distribution survived until the reform, of which we shall treat later. The Roman clergy did not in this matter come under the influence of the monastic office.

Before we inquire whether the monastic influence made itself felt in other ways in Rome, we must say something about another question which has been debated among liturgists of late years; namely, what influence did St. Gregory the Great have on the arrangement of the canonical hours?[1] Mgr. Batiffol has frankly discarded the view that the notation and the text of the antiphons and responsories of the Roman office are to be attributed exclusively to St. Gregory. His thesis is that there are grounds for attributing, not to any one pontiff in particular, but to several, such as St. Leo (461), St. Gelasius (496), and lastly St. Gregory (604), the collective composition of the Roman chant of the antiphons and responsories, a work which was to be continued after his death. In other words, the chant of the Roman Church was the united work of a succession of popes, of whom St. Gregory was merely a collaborator. Mgr. Batiffol's original thesis did not admit these attenuations, a fact which led Dom Bäumer to dispute it, nor does he seem to have been the only one to express his views on the subject. Taking as his authority a passage in Dom Guéranger's *Institutions liturgiques*, Vol. I,

[1] Mgr. Batiffol, *Histoire du Bréviaire romain*, 3rd ed., Paris, 1911, pp. 69-70. For Dom Bäumer's views, see his *Histoire du Bréviaire*, trad. R. Biron, Vol. I, pp. 289-301, and also Dom Lévêque, *Rev. Quest. hist.*, 1894, Vol. LVI, p. 235.

p. 163, he said that it was difficult to ascertain the precise origin of the elements St. Gregory had re-arranged, for they belonged to the category of those whose origin was lost in the mist of antiquity. With Dom Lévêque, Dom Morin and many others, we may safely assert that St. Gregory collected, re-arranged, completed, perfected and finally fixed the ancient chant of the Roman Church. Consequently, the conflicting views are easily reconcilable, and we may thus sum up St. Gregory's work for the liturgy: "He collected the prayers and the liturgical usages of his predecessors, and assigned to each its proper place; consequently, it is he who gave the liturgy its present form. The liturgical chant owes its name of *Gregorian* to him, because it was through him that it reached its perfection. The canonical hours and the present formulæ of the Mass were also carefully arranged by him."[1]

The lessons at the night office the Roman Church took from Holy Scripture; we learn from one of St. Gregory's letters that other lessons were also admitted, such as the commentaries on Job and on the psalms: there were also extracts from the Acts of the martyrs. But the decretal which bears the name of Gelasius, and which in its final form dates from the time of Pope Hormisdas (†523), shows that the *Gesta martyrum* were carefully censored.

It is clear that St. Benedict, in arranging the psalter for the office, was prompted by the use of the Roman Church as well as by that of other Churches in Italy, especially Milan. His guiding principles were: (1) the whole psalter must be said

[1] Bäumer, ed. Biron, Vol. I, pp. 289, 301-303.

in the course of the week, that is to say, the one hundred and fifty psalms with antiphons, prayers and canticles from the Scripture as usually said: (2) at the night office, the sacred number of twelve must neither be lessened nor exceeded (psalms iii and xciv and the canticles being excepted from this number); similarly, at the day hours there must be twelve psalms, three at each of the little hours; (3) in order to leave sufficient time for work, for the day hours shorter psalms must be chosen, or parts of psalms, such as the octonaries of psalm cxviii; in summer, at the night office, the long lessons were omitted on account of the shortness of the nights; but on Sundays and feast-days, when there was no urgent work to be done, the long lessons were retained; (4) in all things, due measure must be observed for discretion's sake. In various other points St. Benedict conformed to the use of the Roman Church, which justifies the assertion that there is considerable agreement between the Benedictine *cursus* and the Roman.

In the seventh and eighth centuries, the Roman office underwent a liturgical evolution under the influence of the monks: the starting-point of this evolution was the basilica of St. Peter on the Vatican, beside which St. Leo had built a monastery for monks: similar establishments followed at St. Laurence outside the Walls, St. John Lateran, etc. It was after they had thus gained a footing in the basilicas that the monks made their influence felt on the formation of the Roman office. The chief duty of these monks was to sing the office; as clerics, they were bound to take part in the vigil office; as monks, they added the diurnal office, tierce, sext and none: and under Adrian I, they added prime

and vespers. Even beyond the Alps, in Gaul and in England, the office of the monks of St. Peter's was regarded as the true Roman office: the Gallican and the English Church took from that office the distribution of the psalter, the text of the antiphons and responsories, and the cycle of the feasts of the *Temporale*.[1]

The feasts of the saints at Rome, as in all other Churches, were originally anniversaries of the martyrs: their history is, therefore, bound up with that of the cemeteries and the basilicas in the cemeteries,[2] where the different anniversaries were celebrated. The siege of Rome by the Goths in 537 caused the cult of the martyrs to be transferred within the city: and at the same period, the Roman churches began to be designated by the names of saints, some not local. Pope Gregory III (†741) built in the basilica of St. Peter an oratory in honour of the Saviour, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and all the Just, and established a separate commemoration of them at the office. In France under Pepin and Charlemagne private initiative was to substitute the Roman Ordo and the Roman chant for the old Gallican office.

[1] On the infiltration of the Roman office into the Gallican prior to the reign of Pepin, see Dom G. Morin, *Fragments inédits d'antiphonaire gallican*, in the *Revue Bénédictine*, 1905, p. 329.

[2] A proof that the feasts of the saints were celebrated in the *locus depositionis* may be found in two lists of anniversaries: *Depositio martyrum* and *Depositio episcoporum*, which are printed in Duchesne, *Liber pontificalis*, Vol. I, pp. 10-11.

III. The Roman Office from Charlemagne to the end of the Twelfth Century

In France, until the reign of Charlemagne, the office had been built up of various elements, on the origin of which liturgists are not in agreement; some hold that they derive from Roman, others from Eastern sources. Since there was no predominant centre, various elements were added to the original nucleus, Celtic elements by St. Columbanus, Roman or monastic elements by St. Benedict. In 754, St. Chrodegang of Metz founded in his cathedral a community of clerics on the model of the monastic communities of Rome; his example was followed by Remigius, archbishop of Rouen, in 760. It was Charlemagne who enforced liturgical uniformity throughout his kingdom, and our most reliable source of information for this period is the writings of Amalar of Treves, who died in 850.[1] According to Dom Wilmart, the *de ecclesiasticis Officiis* of Amalar is an invaluable source of information about the state of public worship and the attitude of the clergy towards the two uses at the beginning of the ninth century. We have in this Roman office to distinguish between the ferial office and festal of the *Temporale*, and the *Sanctorale*.

1. The ferial office of the *Temporale* comprises

[1] On Amalar, *de ecclesiasticis Officiis* and *de ordine Antiphonarii*, see Dom Morin, *La question des deux Amalaire* and *Amalaire; esquisse bigraphique*, in the *Revue Bénédictine*, Vol. VIII, p. 433, and Vol. IX, p. 337; Dom A. Wilmart, *Pour une nouvelle édition du traité d'Amalaire sur les offices*, dans *Rev. Bénéd.*, 1925, Vol. XXXVII, p. 73.

the nocturnal and the diurnal *cursus*. In the former we have vespers, the night office proper, and lauds. Vespers begin with the *Deus in adjutorium* and the *Gloria;* there are five psalms with antiphons (the text is that of St. Jerome's second version of the psalter, known as the Gallican, made by him in 392, which eventually was adopted at Rome also, except in the Missal;[1] consequently, the faithful should not be surprised to find that the Latin of the psalms in the Missal differs occasionally from the Latin of the psalms sung at vespers; the Missal follows the Roman psalter, while the Breviary follows the Gallican). Next, there is a short lesson from Holy Scripture; no hymn, a versicle, the *Magnificat* and its antiphon, and finally the *Kyrie eleison, Pater noster, Dominus vobiscum,* and the collect. Then follows a short form of prayer which we now know as the *preces feriales*.[2] Compline was a purely monastic office, the monks' prayer at bedtime. The conclusion of the reading in the refectory during supper has been replaced by what we call the short lesson; there was originally no *Pater* or *Confitebor* at the beginning; four psalms, the *Nunc dimittis* (the Benedictine office has only three psalms and no *Nunc dimittis*) and a collect without *Kyrie eleison*. The night office proper was sung at midnight; it began with *Domine, labia mea aperies* without *Deus in adjutorium*, which was considered redundant; the invitatory and psalm xciv, *Venite exultemus*, sung by a cantor while the choir repeated the invitatory after every two verses: the

[1] On the two versions of the psalter, see Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

[2] For the *preces feriales*, see Dom Bäumer, *Histoire du Bréviaire* (trad. Biron), Vol. II, p. 429.

first set of twelve psalms without antiphons, a *Gloria* being interpolated after every fourth psalm (for the Roman distribution of the psalter see the preceding section); a versicle, and then three lessons. In France, a *Pater noster* was said before the first lesson, but in Rome, there was a short absolution. The lessons were taken from Scripture, the books of which were distributed in the following manner: during Advent, Isaias; from Christmas to Sexagesima, the other three major Prophets and the twelve minor Prophets; from Sexagesima to Holy Week, the Pentateuch, Joshue and Judges; from Easter to Pentecost, the Acts of the Apostles, the Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse; in summer, the four books of Kings and Paralipomenon; from the beginning of autumn to December, the Sapiential books, Job, Esther, Judith, Esdras, Machabees. A responsory similar to the gradual at Mass followed each lesson, and the text bore some relation to the Scripture occurring. Responsories taken from the psalms followed the lessons from the New Testament. The night office on ferias came to an end after the first twelve psalms; on Sundays, a further six psalms were added, and six lessons and responsories divided into two portions or nocturns. Then the lessons were taken from the writings of the Fathers which were gathered together into what were called *sermonaria* or *homiliaria*. At Rome, the ninth responsory ended the night office on Sundays; there was no *Te Deum*, which in the Roman office was said on the feast of canonized popes only. The Benedictine rule ordains that it shall be said after the twelfth responsory. Lauds was not said until sunrise, the interval being longer or shorter according to the time of year. Like

vespers, it began with *Deus in adjutorium* and the *Gloria*; there were five psalms, namely, psalms lxii and lxvi under one *Gloria*; psalms cxlviii-cl under one *Gloria*; these matins psalms, as they were called, never varied;[1] on Sundays, psalm xcii, *Dominus regnavit*, and the canticle *Benedicite* were added; on ferias, psalm l, *Miserere* and one of the other six canticles from the Old Testament. The lauds psalms, like the vesper ones, had antiphons, and were followed by a short lesson and a versicle. Then came the *Benedictus* with its antiphon, *Kyrie eleison* and *Pater noster*; Amalar does not mention the collect. This ended the nocturnal *cursus* properly so-called.

The diurnal *cursus* comprised the three hours of tierce, sext and none: the scheme was the same for each: *Deus in adjutorium*, *Gloria*, three psalms or octonaries of psalm cxviii, which never varied, without any antiphon, a short lesson, versicle, *Kyrie*, *Pater*. Prime, like compline, was a purely monastic devotion, the monks' prayer on rising: the scheme was similar to that of the other little hours: *Deus in adjutorium*, *Gloria*, three psalms: *Deus in nomine tuo* and the two first octonaries of psalm cxviii.[2] No short lesson, a versicle, *Kyrie eleison*, and *Pater noster*. Amalar here adds the *Credo* and the *Miserere*, between which he inserts the versicles for penitence and pardon now known as the *preces*

[1] See Dom Morin, *L'uniformité dans les laudes du dimanche du IVe au VIIe siècle*, in the *Revue Bénédictine*, Vol. VI, p. 301.

[2] An accretion, the origin of which is obscure, was added to this office on Sundays in the form of the five psalms xxi-xxv. In the Breviary of Pius V these five psalms were divided among the ferias, at prime. Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 130 note.

feriales of prime. The prayers which follow were originally distinct from the office of prime: according to the rule of St. Chrodegang they were to be said in the chapter-house, where the Martyrology was read, followed by the versicle *Pretiosa* and the collect *Sancta Maria*. God's blessing was then invoked on the day's work in the prayers *Deus in adjutorium* (thrice), *Gloria*, *Kyrie*, *Respice in servos*, *Dirigere*. In Rome, the monks here read a portion of the rule of St. Benedict, which explains the presence of a capitulum in the Roman Breviary at this point.

2. The feasts of the *Temporale*: the cycle began with Advent. The custom of observing with special solemnity the four Sundays before Christmas was an ancient one in Gaul, and was introduced into Rome some time between the pontificates of St. Leo and St. Gregory the Great. These Sundays had stations: the first at St. Mary Major, the second at Holy Cross in Jerusalem, the third at St. Peter on the Vatican; the fourth had no station until the twelfth century. The psalmody was that of the ordinary Sunday office; the first three lessons were taken from Isaias, the next five from the Fathers; the ninth was a homily on the Gospel read at the Mass of the station. The responsories gave the office its special character, and the whole office took its name from the opening words of the first responsory, *Aspiciens a longe*, one of the most remarkable in the Breviary. At Rome, down to the twelfth century, these four Sundays of Advent were so many stages in a season of rejoicing of which the third, *Gaudete Sunday*, was the culminating point: it was the influence of Frankish monasticism which led to the season being regarded as one of

penance. From December 17 to 24 the ferial psalms at lauds had proper antiphons which contained allusions to the light of the star of Bethlehem, while the *Magnificat* antiphon at vespers was, as early as the eighth century, taken from the series we know as "the great Oes." On Christmas Day the station was at St. Mary Major: on the vigil we meet for the first time with an office which is neither that of the Sunday nor of the feria: an office of three nocturns, each with three psalms and three lessons. It served as a model for the office of other feasts, except Easter and Pentecost. There seem to have been two offices at Rome on Christmas night, one sung by the Pope and the monks at St. Mary Major, the other by the clergy at St. Peter, each with its proper responsories and antiphons; the latter office was, in France, assigned to the feast of the Circumcision. On the feast of the Epiphany, also known as the Christmas of the Magi, the station was at St. Peter, and the office was the first of those modelled on the Christmas office, though the omission of the invitatory was a Frankish innovation. The Roman Lent, even in the fourth century, lasted over six weeks, but the custom of assigning a station to each day within that period, as well as to the three Sundays immediately preceding, in *quinquagesima*, in *sexagesima*, in *septuagesima*, cannot be traced back further than the seventh century. Septuagesima Sunday was still within the season of rejoicing, and the *alleluia* was not struck out of the antiphons and responsories until the eleventh century. On these nine Sundays before Easter, the office was the ordinary Sunday one of eighteen psalms and nine lessons; on ferias there were twelve psalms and three lessons, but

it was the responsories which gave to both offices their special character. Those for Passion-tide have nearly all been retained in the Breviary; according to Amalar, they were composed by the leading liturgists of the Roman Church. On the first three days of Holy Week, the office was the ordinary ferial one. But that of the last three days assumed the proportions which characterize the greatest feasts of the Church's year, and survives to this day as a purely Roman creation. It is described in the most ancient Roman Ordos. There was no *Deus in adjutorium* or invitatory; three nocturns, each with three psalms and their antiphons; no *Gloria Patri* after the psalms or at the end of the lessons; after the psalms, a versicle and the lessons, but no blessing; in the first nocturn, the lessons were taken from the Lamentations of Jeremias; in the second, from the Enarations of St. Augustine on the psalms; in the third, from the Epistles of St. Paul. At lauds, the psalms had antiphons, there was no *Kyrie eleison* at the end, but the antiphon *Christus factus est* and the collect; after which all dispersed in silence. On Maundy Thursday, the office was celebrated at St. John Lateran, the basilica being lit up as usual: but on Good Friday, when the office was at Holy Cross in Jerusalem, the lights were put out one after the other, so that at the end of the *Benedictus*, only one was left burning; this one was hidden behind the altar, where it remained until Easter Eve, in token of the death of Christ and the darkness that covered the earth: the night office on Easter Eve was said in the dark. The custom of putting out the candles one after another is a Frankish custom which ousted the Roman one some time after the

ninth century. The whole drama of our Lord's Passion was set forth in the responsories of this office; they described in full the sufferings, death and burial of Christ and the compunction they aroused in men. At three o'clock on Holy Saturday began the Easter vigil: there was no blessing of the fire nor of the Pascal candle, for both these rites were introduced into Rome from France after the eighth century; the office began without any warning or blessing with the lessons we call the Prophecies: they were read first in Greek, then in Latin: each was followed by *oremus*, *flectamus genua*, and the collect. After the third, sixth and ninth, a responsory was sung in Greek and in Latin. In other words, it was the night office shorn of the psalms. Then followed the baptism of the catechumens, which the bishop administered in the baptistery, while in the basilica, the people and the *schola cantorum* sang the litanies, the same invocations being repeated as many as fifteen times. At the invocation *Agnus Dei*, the basilica was lit up to welcome the pontiff and the neophytes returning in procession. The Mass, the first Mass of Easter, began with the chanting of the *Gloria in excelsis*. It was not over until past midnight: the daily night office then began with a prayer and the kiss of peace. The *Deus in adjutorium* was said, the invitatory with *alleluia*, then three psalms only, with *alleluia* as antiphon, three lessons, three responsories: then lauds with *alleluia* as antiphon for all the psalms. There was no *Kyrie eleison* after the *Benedictus*, only the antiphon *Haec dies* and the collect. Throughout the octave, which was the facsimile of the feast, there was the same office of three psalms, three lessons, and three responsories.

The *Ordines Romani* contain no allusion to tierce, sext and none, or even vespers during the last three days of Holy Week. On the other hand, the vespers on Easter Day had a special character: the station in the evening was at St. Peter; the clergy took their places round the high altar, the *Kyrie eleison* was sung, then the three psalms: *Dixit Dominus*, *Confitebor*, *Beatus vir*, with *alleluia*: between the second and third psalm there was a group of versicles alluding to the Resurrection. After the psalms the *schola* sang a lengthy *alleluia* and the *Magnificat*. The procession then left the high altar and took up its position between the nave and the sanctuary, in front of the great cross which hung from the arch overhead. There the psalm *Laudate* with *alleluia* was sung, and the *Magnificat*, with antiphon and collect. The procession then moved on to the font, where a fifth psalm, *In exitu Israel*, was sung, with *alleluia*, and the *Magnificat*, with antiphon and collect. These three stations, with the thrice repeated *Magnificat*, are features of an older Roman liturgy which dated from a time when our canonical vespers were as yet unknown.[1] On the Sunday following, *Dominica in albis deponendis*, the ordinary Sunday office was resumed, and on weekdays, the ordinary ferial office; only the antiphons and responsories were proper during the rest of the Pascal season. The Ascension, forty days after Easter, had, like Christmas and the Epiphany, an office of nine psalms, nine lessons, with proper responsories and antiphons. Pentecost brought back again the office of three

[1] See Dom Morin, *Les vêpres pascales dans l'ancienne liturgie romaine*, in the *Revue Bénédictine*, Vol. VI, p. 150.

psalms and three lessons, which, as at Easter, was repeated throughout the octave. This was because Pentecost or *Pascha Pentecosten*, as the Antiphonar of St. Peter's calls it, had, like Easter, its vigil of six lessons read in Greek and in Latin, followed by the baptism of the catechumens: it seems, however, that there was some hesitation in admitting the assimilation at Rome. Here the cycle of the feasts of the *Temporale* ends, for the feast of the Blessed Trinity is much later than the eighth century. The Roman office is thus reduced to four liturgical types, namely: (1) the ferial office of twelve psalms and lessons; (2) the Sunday office of eighteen psalms and nine lessons; (3) the festal office of nine psalms and nine lessons; (4) the Pascal office (to which in the eleventh century that of Pentecost was assimilated) of three psalms and three lessons. These liturgical types constitute a system which is quite different from that laid down in the *Liber diurnus* in the seventh century. Because St. Gregory VII in the eleventh century lays down in one of his decrees the same order for the office as Amalar, Mgr. Batiffol concludes that Gregory VII merely confirmed the practice of the eighth century. It must, however, be conceded that the saint did more; for instance, he limited to the octaves of Easter and Pentecost only the office of three psalms and three lessons which some churches in Rome had attempted to extend to other vigils; he assigned, once for all, a definite date to the Ember days, in the first week in Lent and in Pentecost week; he decreed that the feasts of popes who were martyrs should be kept throughout the Church as doubles; he protested against certain innovations introduced into the ceremonial from other countries. It would

therefore be incorrect to assert that the Roman office remained unchanged from the ninth to the thirteenth century.

3. The *Sanctorale*. In the course of the eighth century, at Rome, the office of the saints, which had up to that time been celebrated in the cemeteries, found its way into the basilicas as an appendage to the usual daily office. Thus there were at first two offices, the office of the saint without an invitatory, and that of the feria with an invitatory: in time, the latter was ousted, and the one night office fell to the saint. At Rome, two offices were still said for a time on certain great feasts, as on those of SS. Peter and Paul, St. Andrew, St. Laurence, the Assumption, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. The office of these feasts was modelled upon that of the office for Christmas, Epiphany and the Ascension: nine psalms, nine lessons, nine responsories. There were different sets of psalms for the various categories of saints, apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins. This was the origin of the common offices for saints which also included antiphons, versicles, and responsories appropriate to the different categories, apostles, martyrs, confessors and virgins: the proper offices served as models for the common. Thus the office of the *Sanctorale*, which was a late addition to the canonical office of the basilicas, could only find room for itself by crowding out the older office. Into this office, shaped throughout the centuries by unknown hands, Rome put all that was best in her literature and history: her psalter, her Bible, her Fathers, her martyrs. She set on it the stamp of her sober piety, her sense of beauty, her language, her chant, that Gregorian plain-song which of

old entranced the pilgrims to the shrine of St. Peter.[1]

The absence of hymns from the Roman secular office should be noted: the monks sang the hymns prescribed by the Benedictine rule in their own churches, but omitted them in the office of the basilicas. When the Roman rite was introduced into the Carolingian Empire, the hymns dropped out of the office of the Frankish churches; gradually, however, both in Gaul and in Germany, the secular clergy resumed the use of hymns in imitation of the monastic office. In the thirteenth century the Roman Breviary of the Curia finally adopted the hymnal.[2]

[1] For a comparison with the office of St. Peter's at Rome, see the *Ordines Romani* (saec. VII-X), printed from various manuscripts at St. Gall, Einsielden, etc. Cf. Gerbert, *Monumenta veteris liturgiæ Alemanniæ*, San Blasien, 1779; Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 173, quotes that of an anonymous writer of the ninth century.

[2] It is quite legitimate to indulge in some speculation about the use of hymns at Rome. See what has been said on this subject in *Hymnes latines et hymnaires* in the series *Science et Religion*, Paris, 1914, p. 29.

CHAPTER II

THE CHANGES MADE IN THE BREVIARY BETWEEN THE THIRTEENTH AND THE SIXTEENTH CENTURIES

I. The changes in the office as described by Amalar between the eleventh and the twelfth century. II. The formation of the Breviary of the Roman Curia. III. A description of this Breviary. IV. Its fate in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries.

The office of the Roman basilicas, as it was after Charlemagne, was not to remain without some change. However slight those made by St. Gregory VII may have been, as Mgr. Batiffol alleges, that pontiff certainly made some: he limited to the octaves of Easter and Pentecost the office of three psalms and three lessons which the clergy had attempted to extend to other vigils as well, he assigned a date to the Ember days of Lent and Pentecost, he decreed that the feasts of all popes who were martyrs should be kept throughout the Church as doubles, he protested against certain innovations which foreigners had wished to introduce into Rome. No doubt these measures were taken in order to preserve intact the Roman office, and they are negligible in comparison with those which are to be detailed in this chapter.[1]

[1] See the articles *Amalaire* and *Agobard*, in the *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, Vol. I, col. 1925 and 1971.

I. The Changes in the Office as Described by Amalar Between the Eleventh and the Twelfth Century

Before we embark on the period of two hundred years which is to be dealt with in this section, we must explain that, immediately after Charlemagne's death, the Franks made certain changes in the Roman liturgy which had been adopted by them. These changes affected the responsories in particular, the system of lessons, and their texts.

Helisachar, the chancellor of Louis the Pious, abbot of St. Riquier and later of St. Maximin at Treves, had noticed that there was a difference in the way the responsories were recited in Gaul and at Rome: at Rome, the whole of the responsory was repeated after the verse, whereas in Gaul, the second half only of the responsory was repeated. For instance: at Rome they said—*Responsory*: "Tu es Petrus, ait Dominus ad Simonem." *Verse:* "Ecce sacerdos magnus qui in diebus suis placuit Deo." And then came a repetition of the responsory: "Tu es Petrus," etc. But in Gaul, the repetition began: "Ait Dominus ad Simonem," the clause which follows the words: "placuit Deo." Helisachar could not brook these juxtapositions, and sought a remedy in a systematic revision of the responsories. Amalar of Metz followed his example and published a compilation, *de ordine Antiphonarii*,[1] in which he retained

[1] Mgr. Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 188, holds that St. Gregory VII did not make a reform of the Roman office; this is not the view of Dom Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, Vol. I, p. 281; nor of Dom Bäumer (trad. Biron), *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1. See my summary: *Le Bréviaire romain*, pp. 67-68.

whatever was traditional and ancient, but introduced verses or responsories from the old Roman or Metz service books, and selected new antiphons from the Gospel which he added to the Roman repertory, altering its arrangement in some places. He had a bitter opponent in Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, who in his *De correctione Antiphonarii* maintained that the antiphons and responsories should be taken from Scripture exclusively, and cut out all the others which he called superfluous folly. In spite of this, the Gallican customs introduced by Amalar found their way to Rome, and the text of the responsorial was altered in consequence.

The liturgists of the ninth century also noticed that, on account of the length of the lessons, the Epistles of St. Paul were read more than once in the course of the year; to guard against this difficulty, they were assigned a definite place in the cycle. Moreover, in order to balance the lessons of the second nocturn, which contained commentaries or sermons from the Fathers on the books of the Old Testament, it was decided that a patristic homily on the Gospel should conclude the third nocturn. There is among Alcuin's works on the liturgy a *homiliarium* or selection of passages from the Fathers of the Church on the Gospel to be read in the office.

The barbarian invasions had destroyed a great many churches and shrines of saints, while others were in danger of destruction: consequently, their relics were translated, which led to a great many local feasts being introduced into the calendar of the universal Church. In gratitude to the Franks, the Romans also adopted some of their customs: thus, under Pope St. Leo III (†816), they introduced from that country the Rogation days.

These changes were to continue during the following centuries. John Beleth[1] (†about 1165) in his liturgical treatise *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, and John of Avranches in his *de ecclesiasticis Officiis*,[2] describe what Gregory IX in 1241 was to term the Modern Office. The changes they mention turn upon three points: (1) the curtailing of the lectionary; the Paris clergy seemed very remiss to John Beleth, for they rose late for the office, and but few conscientiously recited the day hours. Hence the tendency to shorten the lessons against which the Cluniacs attempted to react; (2) the introduction of new local feasts into the Calendar. Thus in France the feasts of St. Maurice, St. Remigius, St. Leger, St. Germanus, St. Ouen, St. Boniface, St. Medard, St. Michael *in mari*, made their appearance, and contrary to the Roman practice, octaves were assigned to the saints' feasts, which were accordingly raised to the highest rank; this happened for the Assumption, All Saints, SS. Peter and Paul, St. Andrew, St. Michael, St. Martin, in the eleventh century. Other feasts of a more general interest were also introduced; the Blessed Trinity, first established at Liège under Bishop Stephen (†920), and propagated by the Cluniacs, was in the twelfth century adopted by most Churches, although it had long been resisted by the Holy See, Alexander II (†1073) seeing no more reason for a feast of the Blessed Trinity than

[1] The text of Beleth's treatise, as printed in *P.L.*, CCII, col. 13-66, is not to be depended on.

[2] John of Avranches died in 1079, as archbishop of Rouen. His *de ecclesiasticis Officiis* in *P.L.*, CXLVII, col. 27, has been newly edited by R. Delamare, under the title: *Le de ecclesiasticis Officiis de Jean d'Avranches, étude liturgique et publication du texte inédit du ms. II*, 304, *Bibl. Montpellier*, Paris, 1923.

for one of the Blessed Unity; the Transfiguration, first found in Spain in the ninth century, and afterwards propagated by the Cluniacs, Peter the Venerable (†1157) having composed the office of the feast. But the most important change in the office was the introduction of hymns. These, as we know, were used in the East as early as the fourth century; St. Ambrose introduced them into the office of the Church of Milan, and St. Benedict into his monastic office. Since the Roman office excluded them, they had been proscribed in Gaul under Charlemagne; but only for a time, for as early as the ninth century they were restored, and in the twelfth century they found a place in the Roman office itself.

On the other hand, a good many accretions were now added to the office: the recitation at prime of the *Quicumque* or Creed of St. Athanasius[1] which had found its way into the liturgy of the Frankish Churches in the ninth century, and was recited daily in the Cluniac monasteries:[2] in the course of the eleventh century, commemorations of the saints were introduced at vespers and lauds, daily throughout the year, except during Christmas time and from Passion Sunday to Pentecost:[3] during the second half of the eleventh century, the custom of reciting the Office of our Lady daily became widespread: its

[1] On the *Quicumque*, see Dom Morin, *Le symbole de saint Athanase et son premier témoin S. Césaire d'Arles*, in the *Revue Bénédictine*, 1901, p. 347; Tixeront, in the *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, Vol. I, col. 2178.

[2] On the Cluniac customs, see Udalric, *Consuetudines Cluniacenses*, in *P.L.* CXLIX, col. 646.

[3] P. Lejay, *Les accroissements de l'office quotidien*, in the *Revue du Clergé français*, 1904, Vol. XI, p. 115 *seq.*

institution is attributed to St. Peter Damien. Lastly, the Office of the Dead, which at Rome in the eighth century was regarded as part of the funeral service, came to be celebrated daily in the monasteries: the earliest evidence for this practice is found in Angilbert's Ordo for St. Riquier, an eighth century document. St. Peter Damien says that the Office of the Dead was in the eleventh century said daily in Italy and in France. Monks and clerics whom these devotions did not satisfy added to them the recitation of the fifteen gradual psalms before prime, the penitential psalms after prime, and an indefinite number of psalms for benefactors.

II. The Formation of the Breviary of the Roman Curia

Until the thirteenth century, the Divine Office had been recited daily by the clergy or the monks assembled in choir: it implied the use of a number of large books, a Psalter for the psalms, an Antiphonar for the antiphons, a Responsorial for the responsories, a Bible for the lessons, as well as a Lectionary or Passional or *Homiliarium*: to these must be added the Collectar, or collection of collects, the Hymnal, and the Martyrology. Some of these books were in several volumes, and all were written by hand. Attempts at codification were made; there were little books, *epitomata* or *breviaria*. These portable office books were used by the clergy when they recited their office out of choir, or on journeys. The influence of the Roman Curia

counted for much in this movement; the Pope's chapel could not be tied down to the canonical office in choir, since the Pope and his clergy were constantly on the move; each member of the Curia said his office privately. According to Raoul de Tongres (†1403), long before the popes had deserted Rome for Avignon, the Curia had a different office from that of the Roman churches, both in its contents and in its rubrics. Pope Innocent III had outlined its general plan about the year 1205.[1] The *ordinarium* devised by this Pope spread with amazing rapidity throughout the whole Latin Church, as the Franciscan rule attests. In 1223, there were in circulation Breviaries of the Divine Office *secundum consuetudinem Romanæ curiæ*, and these books were adopted by the Friars Minor. They, however, corrected them for their own use, and their revision constituted a second edition of the *Breviarium curiæ*, which was mainly the work of Aymo, the general of the Order,[2] and was approved by Pope Gregory IX in 1241. In 1277, Pope Nicolas III, himself a Franciscan, ordained that the Breviary of the Friars Minor should be the Breviary used by the Roman Church, thus doing away with the fine old Roman office of the time of Charlemagne and Alcuin: this was, in fact, a liturgical revolution.

[1] A. Cholat, *Le Bréviaire de sainte Claire*, Paris, 1904, from a manuscript written in 1227 for the saint's use. This document has several claims on our interest, but it does not give an exact idea of what the Breviary planned by Innocent III was like.

[2] The Breviary amended by Aymo was again revised in 1260.

III. A Description of this Breviary

The Breviary falls into five parts: the Calendar, the Psalter, the *Temporale*, the Proper of Saints, or *Sanctorale*, and the Common of Saints.[1]

The Calendar is usually placed at the beginning of the book, and is followed by the Psalter, which often has no title, though sometimes one is given which includes the invitatory and hymns; the psalms and canticles are given in the order in which they are said in the Sunday and ferial offices; inserted in their proper places are the *Te Deum*, the *Quicumque*, the hymns, invitatories, antiphons, versicles, capitula of matins, lauds, vespers, and the little hours on Sundays and ferias. The hymns of the Proper of the Time or of the Saints are either at the beginning or at the end of the Psalter. The version of the psalms used by the Friars Minor was that known as the Gallican; but in the Roman basilicas the earlier Roman version held its ground in the office until the end of the fifteenth century. The book as a whole bore the title: *Incipit ordo Breviarii secundum consuetudinem Romanæ curiæ.*

The *Temporale* contained the proper office of the time, beginning with the first Sunday in Advent and ending with the last Sunday after Pentecost; in it figured for the first time the office of the Blessed Trinity, which the Franciscans had adopted in 1260, and that of Corpus Christi,[2] composed by St. Thomas

[1] Batiffol, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

[2] There was, prior to St. Thomas Aquinas, a Cistercian office of the Blessed Sacrament. See Dom G. Morin, *L'office cistercien pour la Fête-Dieu, comparé avec celui de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, in the *Revue Bénédictine*, 1910, p. 236.

Aquinas. The antiphons used at the various hours were a kind of refrain after the *Gloria Patri* of each psalm, and were as a rule taken from the psalm itself; they may be traced back to the fourth century. The Breviary of the Curia retained those of the old Gregorian stock. The responsories were a kind of exclamation in which the choir answered the verse sung by the cantor alone, and expressed the feelings evoked by the lesson: they occurred in the office after every lesson, just as the responsory followed the reading of the Epistle at Mass: this responsory at Mass afterwards came to be known as the gradual. We have seen that in France in the ninth century, the old Responsorial was revised: it does not appear to have been noticeably altered in the Breviary of the Curia.

There were more marked changes in the lessons which followed the psalms at matins. To begin with, these lessons were curtailed, and the custom was adopted of marking the exact verses of Holy Scripture, or the passage in the homilies and sermons whence they were taken. Up to that time it had not been thought necessary to do so, because the lessons were chosen by the presiding ecclesiastic, who divided them as he thought fit, and gave the signal which ended them. The Franciscans substituted for the sermons and homilies a short passage from the Chronicle of Pope Damasus or the *Liber pontificalis*; they carried the simplification inaugurated by the Curia a step further, and reduced the lessons to three or four lines; they also decreed that the book of the Bible which had been begun in the office, should be continued at meals in the refectory. Finally they relegated the Scripture lessons to the second nocturn on Sundays.

The *Sanctorale*, on the other hand, was considerably enlarged. It is true that about fifteen saints who had been named in the old Antiphonar were struck out; but this was only done in order to make room for a number of others. There were new feasts, of our Lord, such as the Transfiguration; of our Lady, such as the Presentation, the Visitation, and later the Immaculate Conception; then a group of early popes, Hyginus, Marcellinus, etc.; also a number of Franciscan saints and founders of Orders. Moreover, the rank of these feasts was raised; those celebrated on ferias had a double office, that is, matins and lauds of the feria, then matins and lauds of the feast, the former being said on the eve, shortly after sunset, the latter about midnight. It was about this date that the names began to be changed: instead of the word *vigil*, the word *matins* was used to designate the office of the feast; the word *vigil* was retained for the first matins on feasts, that is, for the office of the feria. Lauds were still designated by the term *matutinæ laudes* until eventually the word *matutinæ* was dropped and only the word *laudes* retained. At matins of the feria, there was no invitatory, three psalms were recited, with antiphons and a versicle, three lessons and three responsories. At matins of the feast, there were nine lessons and nine responsories: the first six lessons were taken from the legend of the saint, the three last from a homily on the Gospel read at the Mass. For the legend of the saint, the apocryphal writings condemned by the decree attributed to Pope Gelasius were accepted, as well as fabulous tales like the Acts of St. George, St. Barbara, St. Catharine of Alexandria, and extracts from passionals found in local editions of the Breviary and admitted without

further question. The custom of reciting a double office is easily explained at Rome, where one of them was said by the canons of the church where the station was held, and the other by the Pope and the cardinals: but it does not appear that the obligation of reciting the double office existed outside Rome. In course of time, the two offices were fused in the city itself, and the feast of the saint was, as it were, enshrined in the office of the day. On account of the multiplicity of feasts, it gradually came about that the ferial office was seldom said. The Common of Saints included the office of apostles and evangelists of one or more martyrs, of confessor pontiffs and confessor non-pontiffs, of virgin martyrs and non-martyrs, of non-virgins, as well as the office of the Dedication and the Office of our Lady.

The daily office was burdened with the Office of our Lady, which was said every day, except on greater feasts, the last three days of Holy Week, Easter Week and the feasts of our Lady. The ferial office was burdened with the Office of the Dead, the penitential and gradual psalms, as well as the prayers at lauds, vespers and the little hours. The laudable custom was introduced of saying the *Pater noster* inaudibly at the beginning and at the end of the canonical hours, and the *Ave* at the beginning and end of the hours of our Lady. The four antiphons to our Lady, *Alma Redemptoris mater*, *Ave regina*, *Regina cœli*, *Salve*, *mater misericordiæ*, which the Friars Minor had adopted as early as 1249, were sanctioned by the Pope in 1350.

These are the component parts of the Breviary of the Curia and the Friars Minor: to them should be added the rubrics, divided into two groups and

placed either at the beginning or at the end of the book. The new rubrics, applying a lost decree of Clement VI, assigned a day and an office to all the feasts in the *Sanctorale*, and thus led, in practice, to the abolition of the office of the time.

IV. Its Fate in the Fifteenth and the Sixteenth Centuries

Intended as it now was, not to be sung in choir, but to be recited privately, the Divine Office was seriously prejudiced by the fact that additional prayers had been appended to it and the feasts of saints multiplied beyond measure. The Friars Minor, says Raoul de Tongres on this subject, had disregarded the Roman use. The consequence was that before long the question of the reform of the Breviary was again raised.

At first, the humanists tried their hand at it; they had established themselves in Rome in the days of Nicolas V (†1455), though it was Leo X who showed the greatest enthusiasm for their achievement; it was his desire that the Latin of the Divine Office should be really pure, full of spirit and elegance. The partiality thus shown for pagan ideals had the result of weakening devotion: after it had been made to comply with the niceties of Ciceronian Latin, the Breviary lost something of its character as a book of praise and prayer to God. The hymnal, which Rome had some little time ago adopted, was subjected to a process of correction, for in the eyes of the humanists, it was the most tasteless portion of the Breviary. Egged on by

Leo X, the Neapolitan Zacharias Ferari, bishop of Guardia Alfiera, published a new hymnal, in which a few faint echoes only recalled the ancient chants. We may grant, indeed, that his work has some merit; there are some fine strophes which recount the parables of Holy Scripture and set forth the dogmas of our faith in moving words: but there are also a multitude of pagan terms and allusions used with incredible naïveté. Clement VII authorized these hymns to be used in the private recitation of the Breviary. At the same time, they gave out that a Breviary revised on a new plan would shortly appear: it was to have the advantage of being free from error, convenient and reduced in length. This plan was never carried into effect.

On the other hand, there were devout men who were firmly attached to the liturgical tradition which Raoul de Tongres had praised: these were the Theatines, and among them, Pietro Caraffa, the future Pope Paul IV. They planned to amend the Breviary of the Curia by reducing the number of feasts, increasing the lessons from Holy Scripture, and eliminating the apocryphal legends. Their efforts met with difficulties, especially the reluctance of Clement VII and, later, the partiality of Paul III for the Breviary of Quignonez. This Spanish Cardinal, who was also general of the Franciscans, published in 1535 an original and daring work which went by the name of the Breviary of Holy Cross, from the Cardinal's title at Rome, *Santa Croce in Gerusalemme*. The Cardinal aimed at restoring the ancient order, but he set about it in his own way. His object was to make the private recitation of the office more attractive and more instructive. He began by cutting out of the office all the versicles,

capitula, and responsories: nothing was left in the Breviary but the psalms, antiphons and lessons. However, he retained such of the hymns as appeared to be authentic and impressive. The whole psalter was to be recited each week, but each hour had only three psalms, the length of some being balanced by the shortness of others: so that all the offices were of equal length. There were three lessons every day, the first taken from the Old Testament, the second from the New, the third was the legend of the saint whose feast was being kept, or a homily on the Gospel for the day, if it had a proper Mass, or, on ordinary ferias, a lesson from the Acts or the Epistles. But these lessons were considerably longer than those of the old Breviary, for Quignonez wished to ensure the greater part of the Old Testament, and the whole of the New, being read through within the year, and the Epistles of St. Paul twice. According to the author's intention, and that of Paul III, who encouraged him, this Breviary was intended for private recitation only, and did not touch the choir office: moreover, the right to recite it, even in private, was granted only to those who made personal application.

But as soon as it appeared, the Breviary of Quignonez aroused protests from every quarter: the Sorbonne at Paris censured it, theologians like Soto saw in it the abandonment of the customs and the practice of antiquity, and John of Arze, a Spanish priest, in a memorandum addressed to the Council of Trent in 1551, accused Quignonez of having lightly departed from tradition and infringed the express decrees of the Holy See. In 1558, Pope Paul IV without condemning the temporary use of the Breviary of Quignonez, decreed that there

was no longer any reason to allow it to be reprinted.[1]

[1] J. W. Legg, *Breviarium romanum a Fr. card. Quignonez editum et recognitum juxta editionem Venetiis* A.D. 1535 *impressam*, Cambridge, 1888. In Roskowany, *de Coelibatu et Breviario*, Vol. VIII, p. 32, will be found the text of the Sorbonne's censure, from d'Argentré. See also Richard Simon, *Lettres choisies*, Amsterdam, 1730, Vol. I, p. 239.

CHAPTER III

ST. PIUS V'S REFORM AND BENEDICT XIV'S PROJECTS FOR THE REVISION OF THE BREVIARY

I. The reform of the Breviary by St. Pius V: (1) Preliminary measures; (2) the accomplishment of the work; (3) the reception accorded to the new Breviary; (4) the changes made in Pope Pius's Breviary during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries; (5) the changes made in the book in France. II. The attempted revision of the Roman Breviary under Benedict XIV.

We will in the following two sections deal with the reform of the Church's official prayer-book effected by the Council of Trent, and with the attempt to reform it which was made in the eighteenth century, which, however, had no result.

I. The Reform of the Breviary by St. Pius V

(1) *Preliminary Measures*

The publication of Quignonez's Breviary resulted in a movement being set on foot for the revision

of the old Roman Breviary, which all desired to see reformed. At the close of its labours, in 1562, the Council of Trent received a request to this effect: it came from the Cardinal of Lorraine, in the name of the King and the bishops of France, and from the Emperor Ferdinand I, the successor of Charles V: the latter specially asked that the office should be considerably shortened, in order to remedy the remissness of the clergy: it was better to recite five psalms with peace and joy of soul than to recite the whole psalter with a dull and heavy heart. In 1563, a commission was formed with instructions to draw up a scheme for the reform of the Breviary, based upon the work of Paul IV and the Theatines.[1] In its twenty-fifth session, the Council decided to refer the matter to the Pope.[2] Pius IV received the three delegates of the Council, Marini, Calinio and Foscarari, and gave them as associates Schotto, the Cardinal of Trani, who seems to have been president of the commission for a time, Sirleto, one of the most learned men in Rome, the Theatine Masso, conspicuous for his knowledge of Church history, Poggiano, a distinguished Latinist, and perhaps also Antonio Caraffa, Pope Paul IV's nephew. On Pius IV's death in 1565, his successor, Pius V, confirmed the commission's full powers.

[1] On the Breviary of the Theatines, see Tufo, *Historia de la religione de Padri clerici regolari*, Rome, 1609, 1616, 2 vols.; Silos, *Historia clericorum regularium a congregatione condita*, Rome, 1650.

[2] On the composition of the commission on the Breviary see Schmid, *Studien über die Reform des römischen Breviers und Missale unter Pius V*, in *Tüb. Quartalschrift*, 1884. He seems to be the best informed writer on this subject.

(2) *The Accomplishment of the Work*

The bull of Pius V, *Quod a nobis*, which announced the new Breviary, explained its purpose and its plan: the commission had endeavoured to restore the ancient order and reduce to due proportions the accretions with which it had been burdened. Thus the traditional distribution of offices of nine lessons and offices of three was retained. In order to leave more room for the psalter, the twelve psalms of the ferial were assigned to the feasts of saints of the rank of simples; and in conformity with the old rubric, it was also decided that one lesson in every three and three lessons in every nine should always be taken from the Scripture occurring. As for the Sunday office of eighteen psalms, it was no longer to be ousted by semi-doubles; during Advent and Lent, it was to take precedence of doubles also. Thus the old order was to be restored.

The penitential and gradual psalms, which had hitherto been obligatory on the ferias of Lent,[1] were to be said, the former on the Wednesdays, and the latter on the Fridays of Lent. The Office of the Dead was to be said once only every month, on Ember days and vigils, as well as on simples during Advent and Lent. The Office of our Lady was to be said on Saturdays only, excepting Ember days, vigils, and during Lent. The office of prime on Sundays was to be relieved of psalms xxi-xxv, which were distributed between the ferias of the

[1] On the additions to the old order, see Grancolas, *Commentaire historique sur le Bréviaire Romain*, Paris, 1713.

week. Thus the additional offices were reduced to due proportions. Pius V went further than the commission on this point: he made optional the recitation on certain days of the Office of the Dead, the Office of our Lady, the penitential and gradual psalms. As for the legends of the saints, which were apocryphal or carelessly written, the commission decided to retain the authentic facts and to recast them in a better style: they gave the preference to lives of saints written by ancient authors and to the authentic acts of the martyrs, but revised them from the point of view of historical accuracy and correctness of diction. Thus the reform was confined to what was strictly necessary.

The bull *Quod a nobis* appeared in July, 1568: it was to become effective at the beginning of the year 1569. It abolished, without any possible restriction, the Breviary of Quignonez, and all Breviaries earlier than the new one, except those which could claim the Pope's approbation or show a prescriptive right of over two hundred years. Moreover, it forbade any change to be made in the Breviary, or any addition to it or curtailing of it.

Pius V's Breviary is the traditional Breviary of the Roman Curia, but in an amended form. Prefixed to it was an excellent exposition of the general rubrics, partly taken from the *Directorium divini officii* of 1540, approved by Paul III. The calendar of fixed feasts was relieved of several feasts, for instance, those of SS. Joachim, Francis de Paula, Bernardino, Antony of Padua, Anne, Lous de Toulouse, Elizabeth of Hungary, the Presentation. Other feasts were reduced to the rank of memorias, for instance, SS. Euphemia, Thecla, Ursula, Saturninus. The number of semi-

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doubles was thirty, of doubles fifty-seven, of memorias thirty-three. The offices of the saints now occupied only about a hundred days of the office of the time. The text of the psalter and the Scripture lessons was that of the Vulgate: the distribution of the books of Holy Scripture throughout the year was in its main lines the same as that laid down in the eighth century. The Antiphonal and Responsorial remained unchanged. There were some notable changes in the second nocturn lessons on fixed feasts:[1] new lessons were assigned to the feasts of SS. Hilary, Paul the First Hermit, John Chrysostom, Ignatius of Antioch, Mathias, Joseph, Soter and Caius, Cletus and Marcellinus, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzen, Basil, the Visitation, the octave of St. Peter, St. Mary Magdalen, the Invention of St. Stephen, St. Dominic, Our Lady of the Snows, the Transfiguration, St. Laurence, the whole octave of the Assumption, St. Bartholomew, St. Augustine, the Beheading of St. John Baptist, the octave of the Nativity of Our Lady, SS. Matthew, Jerome, Francis of Assisi, Simon and Jude, Martin and Damasus. About a dozen homilies for the third nocturn were altered or introduced for the feasts of SS. Agnes, Martha, Matthew, Bernard, Augustine, Jerome, Nicolas, Lucy. This was the weak point in St. Pius V's reform: a good many

[1] On the sources of the historical lessons in the Breviary, see De Smedt, *Introductio generalis ad historiam ecclesiasticam critice tractandam*, Ghent, 1876, p. 483. These lessons were partly taken from the Breviary of Quignonez and inserted in St. Pius V's Breviary. See Zaccaria, *Bibliotheca ritualis*, Rome, 1776-1783, Vol. I, p. 416. Dom Bäumer, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 181, gives a list of them and adds some interesting comments. Clement VIII caused further corrections to be made, *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 279.

lessons were still defective in their sources or in their compilation. The liturgists of the period could do no more, and on the whole, great progress had been effected.

The arrangement of the Breviary was considerably simplified: the psalter, the *Temporale*, the lessons from Holy Scripture were better regulated; the choice of homilies was decidedly happy: with but a few exceptions,[1] these homilies were the gems of patristic literature, and the lessons from Scripture gave a good epitome of the book which was being read. Except in a few offices, the hymns, antiphons, responsories, versicles and collects were the same as those of the Hymnals, Psalters, Responsorials and Sacramentaries of the eighth, ninth, or thirteenth centuries.[2] It was therefore a conservative production; it maintained the tradition of the past thousand years; at the same time it satisfied to some extent the requirements of modern times. A good many points of detail still required alteration, such as the long Sunday offices, and the legends and extracts from the Fathers, which might have been better chosen; but these things did not detract from the value of the book as a whole.

(3) *The Reception Accorded to the New Breviary*

In Italy, the churches of Rome at once adopted the new Breviary; the Vatican basilica, however, retained its ancient psalter, as well as the office of

[1] Dom Morin, *Les leçons apocryphes du Bréviaire romain*, in the *Revue Bénédictine*, 1891, p. 270, notes some defects in these lessons.

[2] See Tommasi, *Opera omnia*, ed. Vezzosi, Rome, 1706, Vols. II, IV and VI; *P.L.* LXXVIII.

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a few popes and other saints whose relics lay in its treasury. The Church of Milan kept its Ambrosian office, and in a chapel of the cathedral at Toledo the Mozarabic office was still said by the chaplains attached to the foundation. In France, liturgical uniformity was restored on the basis of the new Breviary, which most of the bishops adopted without any change; a few, however, had it incorporated almost entire in the diocesan Breviary. The majority of the German dioceses did the same. England, by that time, was separated from the Roman communion; but the priests on the English mission who had been educated on the continent adopted the Roman Breviary of St. Pius V. Among the religious orders, there were some who could claim a prescriptive right of over two hundred years: these retained their ancient Breviaries, revising them here and there, from the new Roman book. This was the proceeding followed by the Benedictines.

The whole number of Churches which accepted the new Breviary may be divided into two classes: those who availed themselves of the permission to adapt their own Breviaries, on condition certain changes were made; and those who took the Roman Breviary as it was; these latter, however, gradually felt the necessity of keeping up some of their diocesan customs and of introducing proper offices for their local saints.[1]

[1] On the reception accorded to the new Breviary, see Dom Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, Vol. I, pp. 448 *seq.*

(4) *The Changes made in Pope Pius's Breviary during the Seventeenth and the Eighteenth Centuries*

Of these changes, some were introduced by the popes, others were due to untoward influences.

Among the former, we will briefly enumerate those of Gregory XIII (†1585), who instituted the feast of the Holy Rosary as a double major on the first Sunday in October, restored the feast of St. Anne to the rank of double, and gave St. Joachim a commemoration—of Sixtus V (†1590), who restored the feasts of the Presentation on November 21, of St. Francis de Paula on April 2, of St. Nicolas de Tolentino on September 10, of St. Januarius and his companions on September 19, of St. Peter Martyr on April 29, and of St. Antony of Padua on June 13. He also bestowed on St. Bonaventure the title of Doctor of the universal Church—of Clement VIII (†1605),[1] who confirmed and outstripped the measures taken by his predecessors; not to mention the editions of the Vulgate, the Martyrology, the Pontifical, the *Cæremoniale Episcoporum*, and of the Missal which appeared during his pontificate, he appointed a commission to prepare a new edition of the Breviary. The latter, revised by Baronius and Bellarmin, came out in 1602: the bull *Cum in Ecclesia* admits a principle which Pius V had eliminated, namely, that the text of the Roman Breviary was still liable to correction. He inserted, between the doubles of the second class and the doubles, the category of double majors; he

[1] A. Bergel, *Die Emendation des römischen Breviers unter Clemens VIII* in *Zeitschrift*, Innsbrück, 1884, Vol. VIII; and De Smedt, *op. cit.*, p. 488.

introduced or restored the feasts of SS. Romuald (February 7), Stanislas (May 7), Lucius (March 4), Catharine of Siena (April 30), John Gualbert (July 12), Eusebius (December 16); other feasts were raised to the rank of double major, the Transfiguration, the Exaltation of the Cross, Our Lady of the Snows, the Presentation, the Immaculate Conception, the Apparition of St. Michael, the two Chairs of St. Peter, St. Peter's Chains, the Conversion of St. Paul, St. John before the Latin Gate, St. Barnabas, etc. This meant that the *Sanctorale* was once more given the preponderance over the *Temporale*. The poet Maffeo Barbarini, who became Pope Urban VIII (†1644) made his corrections to the Breviary bear upon another point: the correction of the hymnal.[1] Besides appointing a commission, whose work issued mainly in the revision of the typography, the Pope had the hymns overhauled by four Jesuits and himself took a hand in the work: those which seemed to violate the rules of prosody and diction were corrected in nine hundred and fifty-two places: the two hymns: *Tibi Christe splendor* for St. Michael and *Cœlestis urbs* of the Dedication office were completely recast; three compositions by Urban VIII were inserted, the hymns to St. Martina, St. Hermenegild, and St. Elizabeth of Portugal, somewhat academic productions in which the Pope took particular delight.

This revision, the merit of which has been called

[1] For a comparison of the old version of the hymns with that of Urban VIII, see Daniel, *Thesaurus hymnologicus*, Halle, 1841; Pimont, *Les hymnes du Bréviaire romain*, Paris, 1874-1884; U. Chevalier, *Le Bréviaire romain* in the *Université catholique*, Lyons, 1891, and *Poésie liturgique traditionelle*, Tournai, 1894.

in question, was introduced into the official edition of 1632, but Urban VIII's successors did not press its adoption: the basilica of St. Peter, and with it, the Benedictine, the Dominicans, the Cistercians and the Carthusians retained the ancient hymns. Urban VIII also showed much zeal in introducing new offices and feasts. After his time, the Roman Breviary underwent little change until our own day, at any rate, so far as its main outlines are concerned: the popes confined themselves to adding new offices and to altering the rank of the feasts in order to increase their solemnity.

(5) *The Changes made in the Book in France*

Under the influence of Gallicanism, attempts were made in France to substitute for the Roman Breviary of Pius V and Urban VIII a so-called reformed Breviary.[1] As early as 1670 there was a revision of the Roman Breviary for the diocese of Paris, which appeared ten years later under the patronage of François de Harley, the archbishop of Paris: it banned from the Divine Office everything which if not certainly authentic, was, at all events, sufficiently supported to be read with respect and reasonable devotion. At that date the text of a number of antiphons and responsories was changed, over forty saints' legends were eliminated, and others revised. But the reformers went still further and abandoned the programme laid down by St.

[1] Dom Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques*, Vol. II, and such monographs as those of Marcel, *Livres liturgiques du diocèse de Langres*, Paris, 1892, and Collette, *Histoire du Bréviaire de Rouen*, Rouen, 1902, etc.

Pius V in favour of that of Quignonez. Foinard and Grancolas agreed in proposing to (1) so privilege the Sunday office that it should in future give place to feasts of our Lord only; (2) so to privilege the ferias of Lent that they should no longer give place to any feasts, even the Annunciation; (3) to shorten the ferial office; (4) to classify the feasts in five grades, a highest grade for feasts of our Lord, a solemn grade for Corpus Christi, the Assumption, St. John Baptist, SS. Peter and Paul, and the patron of the church, a grade of doubles for apostles, one of semi-doubles for doctors, and one of simples for martyrs, the confessors being entitled to a commemoration only, except in their diocese or in their Order; (5) to admit in the lessons for saints' feasts well authenticated legends only. To carry out this project, M. de Vintimille, the archbishop of Paris, applied to the Oratorian Vigier, who was suspected of Jansenism; he was assisted by Mesenguy and Coffin, both appellants against the bull *Unigenitus*. The new Breviary appeared in 1735;[1] in it were applied the principles of Foinard and Grancolas, as we have enumerated them above, and in particular, it was decided that the psalms of the feria should be said on all feasts except on those of martyrs and of our Lady; the psalms were divided, the longer ones being so broken up that there were proper psalms for each feria and for each hour; in this way the whole psalter could nearly always be said in the course of the week. This was not, strictly speak-

[1] *Breviarium parisiense . . . de Vintimille . . . auctoritate ac venerabilis ejusdem ecclesiæ capituli consensu editum*, Paris, 1736. This Breviary was destined to remain in use until 1873, when Cardinal Guibert suppressed it.

ing, an innovation, for as early as the sixth century, St. Benedict had followed this principle in his *Rule* for the distribution of the psalter. The Calendar of this Breviary was relieved of a certain number of feasts; the hymnal was not suppressed, but revised and expanded, and it contained some subtle allusions to the bull *Augustinus*; the legends of the saints in the lectionary bore the stamp of the new school of criticism. One example will suffice to show the Gallicanism of the book; the reformers inserted one feast only of St. Peter's Chair, and instead of the invitatory: *Tu es pastor ovium*, they wrote: *Caput corporis Ecclesiæ Dominum: Venite adoremus.* Strong protests were raised against the publication of this Breviary, which was submitted to the Holy Office for examination.[1] The Holy See, however, did not insist on a retractation from M. de Vintimille. The reason was that Benedict XIV was contemplating a fuller revision of the Roman Breviary.

II. The Attempted Revision of the Roman Breviary under Benedict XIV

In 1856, Mgr. de Roskovany published the history of the congregation formed by Benedict XIV to undertake the reform of the Breviary. More important documents have been published since he wrote; it is therefore quite easy to sum up the main

[1] According to the Roman correspondence of the *Archives du ministère des affaires étrangères*, of which the documents were published by Mgr. Batiffol in *Analecta juris pontificii*, February 18, 1876.

points of this project, which, however, came to nothing.[1] The first members of the congregation appointed in 1741 were: Philippo Maria Monti, secretary of Propaganda, Nicolo Antonelli, secretary of the Sacred College, Dominico Giorgi, the Pope's chaplain. Associated with them were some theologians, and Benedict XIV decreed that the Promotor of the Faith, Valenti, should be the secretary of the congregation. As a guide to the members of the congregation, Benedict XIV handed over to them two memoranda, one of which, the *Memorandum italicum*, asked for the emendation of the accessory parts of the Breviary, such as the calendar, the text of the lessons, responsories and antiphons, and nothing more, while the other, the *Memorandum gallicanum*, pointed out a number of errors in the Breviary and called for their correction. The members of the congregation, who considered that their rôle was merely consultative, read both memoranda and decided first to discuss the question of the calendar, that is, the number and the order of feasts.

In order to do so, they had to ascertain what was the leading idea of the previous reforms, and in particular, that of Pius V. They learnt from a document produced by Valenti, that on account of the increased number of feasts, the psalms appointed for the common of saints were said over and over again, and that the recitation of the psalter within the space of a week had become impossible. Con-

[1] See Mgr. Batiffol, *Inventaire des lettres inédites de pape Benoit XIV au Cardinal de Tencin*, Paris, 1894; a digest of this correspondence appeared in the *Revue du Clergé français*, March 15, 1895. See also *Histoire du Bréviaire romain*, p. 369.

sequently, Pius V had suppressed the privilege of simple feasts, forbidden them to be transferred, done away with other obligatory prayers, and ordained that two out of every three lessons should be taken from Scripture. But in the course of the two succeeding centuries, that is, from 1568 to 1741, the number of doubles and semi-doubles had risen from 138 to 228, and if to this latter figure be added the thirty-six movable feasts of the year, only ninety days remained free for the Sunday and ferial office. As in 1568, therefore, they had to set about reducing the number of feasts in the calendar.

The next question was to decide which feasts were to be suppressed. Of the feasts of our Lord, the commission found only one of recent institution: that of the Holy Name of Jesus; for the feasts of our Lady, they decided to re-enforce the decree of Pius V which suppressed the Presentation, and thought it advisable to suppress the feasts of the Holy Name of Mary, the Holy Rosary, Our Lady of Ransom, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Seven Dolours, the Espousals, the Patronage of our Lady, the Translation of the Holy House of Loretto, the Expectation, because these feasts crowded out the Sunday office. The feast of the Apparition of St. Michael on May 8 was suppressed because it seemed to duplicate the feast on September 29, but the feast of the Guardian Angels was retained, in spite of the fact that it was of recent institution. A lengthy discussion then began on the subject of confessors. It was suggested that SS. Joachim and Anne should be kept on the same day, as well as the two feasts of St. Peter's Chair, while the commemoration of St. Paul on June 30 was to be kept only in those churches

dedicated to the Apostle. They tried to come to some understanding about the other saints by applying the following principles: (1) to retain all saints mentioned in the canon of the Mass; (2) to retain all whose feasts appeared in the ancient Roman Sacramentaries; (3) to retain all saints whose authentic Acts survive, or who have been made the object of an *eulogium* by some early Father, provided only that their *cultus* is ancient; (4) to retain canonized popes with an ancient *cultus*; as well as doctors, founders of Orders, and some saints representative of every nation in Christendom; and lastly, to eliminate those who do not fall into any of the above categories. In this way, they contrived to eliminate about ninety-five feasts. The commission still had to settle the rank of the feasts they had retained. They agreed that there should be ten doubles of the first class, namely, six of our Lord, the Assumption, St. John Baptist, SS. Peter and Paul, and All Saints; twenty-seven second-class doubles, twelve double majors, twenty-three double minors, and twenty-seven semi-doubles. The number of simples was increased to sixty-three, and there were twenty-nine saints with a commemoration at vespers and lauds. Moreover, every church was to keep the anniversary of its dedication and the feast of its titular or patron saint as a double of the first class.

The calendar was submitted to Benedict XIV for inspection; a letter from the Pope to the Cardinal de Tencin, dated June 7, 1743, shows that he had expected something else from his advisers: namely, a new Roman Breviary: one in which everything would be taken from the Scriptures, and only the mysteries of our Lord celebrated as feasts,

together with those of our Lady and the Apostles, all other feasts being entitled to a commemoration only, thus cutting out all legends. The Pope said nothing about the arrangement of the psalter; no doubt he thought that the restoration of the office of the season would satisfy the desires of all. The commission objected that to reduce all the feasts of saints to the rank of simples would be inconsistent with the immemorial custom of the Church and would bring countless difficulties in its wake.

Benedict XIV seems to have changed his mind more than once; at his bidding, the commission set to work again and at Easter, 1747, Valenti submitted to the Pope a plan for the reform both of the calendar and of the office. In the *Temporale*, there were few changes, and these affected the lectionary, only the *Sanctorale* was subjected to a more thorough revision: the antiphons and responsories were changed wherever they were taken from apocryphal Acts, a good many historical lessons were altered as well as homilies, though to a lesser degree; in the common of saints only two unimportant changes were made.[1] How was it that the Pope did not ratify the project which was presented to him? It is supposed that he wished to verify for himself the accuracy and the opportuneness of the corrections it contained. In 1755 he wrote: "We still have two tasks to accomplish. One concerns the sacraments, the other is a

[1] In the plan as submitted to Benedict XIV, there was no mention of any change in the distribution of the psalter. An unpublished dissertation by Orlandi has been inserted in the documentary evidence, *de non immutando veteri Psalmodiæ ritu*. It was to this point that Pius X first directed his reform, as we shall see later.

thorough revision of our Breviary. But it would take time, and it is not easily found; even if we do, the weight of years and infirmity makes itself felt." In 1756 he finished the question of the Byzantine ritual, and the turn of the Breviary was to come. But on May 4, 1758, Benedict XIV died, without having accomplished the difficult task of the revision of the Breviary, a matter about which his generation were so hard to please.

CHAPTER IV

THE REFORM OF THE BREVIARY UNDER PIUS X

I. The preliminaries. The state of the Breviary in the nineteenth century. II. Pius X's reform.

I. The Preliminaries. The State of the Breviary in the Nineteenth Century

After the death of Benedict XIV, the Church witnessed the continuation and eventually the extinction of the liturgical innovations which the Gallican bishops had set on foot, to the great detriment of unity in public worship. Under the influence of Febronius and Joseph II, Germany and Austria had both followed suit. The Roman pontiffs tried to react: Clement XIII, for instance, authorized an office in honour of the Sacred Heart, but the Church had to wait until the reign of Pius IX before the feast was made of universal obligation.

The French Revolution and the Concordat of 1801, which remedied it, did not put an end to the confusion caused by the use of diocesan liturgies. The new boundaries assigned to the French dioceses only made matters worse; in one diocese as many

as seven or eight different liturgies were in use, and eventually everyone agreed that it was necessary to be in union with the Roman Church in the ceremonies of public worship. Dom Guéranger exerted his energies to obtain this result; in 1839, Mgr. Parisis, bishop of Langres, gave the signal for the return to the old traditions by making the Roman rite obligatory throughout his diocese. In 1842, Cardinal Gousset, archbishop of Rheims, followed his example; the movement grew apace, and by 1853, the greater number of the French dioceses had rallied to the Roman use. At the date of the Vatican Council, the liturgical unity of France and Rome was an accomplished fact. A similar movement had been effected in Germany.

In response to the wishes of several French bishops, Pius IX had, as early as 1856, named a commission to inquire into the following question: Did a reform of the Roman Breviary seem opportune?[1] Several proposals were laid before the Vatican Council, but there was no time to inquire into them.[2] Thus the inconveniences caused by the conflicting claims of the *Temporale* and the

[1] G. Schober, *Explanatio critica*, Ratisbon, 1891, p. 78, mentions this commission which he calls *Congregatio particularis pro recognoscendo Missali et Breviario:* unfortunately, he does not give the source of his information. He adds *circa Breviarium . . . sententia data fuit quod nulla novæ recognitionis necessitas existeret*, another point which cannot now be verified. See Dom Bäumer, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 403, note 1.

[2] This series of proposals may be found in *Acta et Decreta Sacrorum Conciliorum Collectio Lacensis*, Freiburg in Breisgau, 1890, Vol. VII. There are some in Martin, *Omnium Concilii Vaticani ad doctrinam et disciplinam pertinent documentorum collectio*, Paderbornæ, 1873.

Sanctorale continued; they were even increased by the new feasts which were added to the calendar by Pius IX and Leo XIII. The latter pontiff did indeed attempt to remedy this state of affairs by declaring that all feasts of the rank of semi-double and double minor, except those of doctors, should no longer be transferred, but reduced to the rank of simple (1882). The result of this measure was that priests had more frequent opportunities of reciting the ferial office. But the clergy had little liking for that office, on account of its monotony and the length of the psalms; moreover, it so happened that in the *Temporale* the longest office fell just on Saturday and Sunday, days on which the parish priests have most to do. In 1853, Leo XIII in a general Indult allowed a special votive office for each day of the week to be substituted for the ferial office throughout the year. The only exceptions were the week before Christmas and the interval between Passion Sunday and Easter Sunday. Once again, the ferial office was almost entirely eliminated.[1]

II. Pius X's Reform[2]

The Sovereign Pontiff deemed it opportune to

[1] In 1902 Leo XIII appointed a *Liturgical Commission* to study historico-liturgical questions: Breviary, Missal, Pontifical and Ritual.

[2] The bull *Divino afflatu* promulgating this reform has been made the subject of various monographs enumerated by Dom Cabrol, in *La réforme du Bréviaire et du calendrier*, pp. 75-76. They are: Mgr. Batiffol, *La nouvelle réforme du Bréviaire romain*, a series of articles in *La Croix*, December 28, 1911, January 3 and April 2,

begin by recasting the psalter, that is, the distribution of the one hundred and fifty psalms among the different day and night hours. The ancient distribution had been made at a time when the three main hours of matins, lauds and vespers constituted the whole of the secular office, and when the other hours belonged to the monastic office only. At that time the three main hours had to divide the whole psalter amongst themselves: later, when the little hours became part of the daily office of obligation, they were assigned psalms which were repeated every day. This meant that the psalter was increased by so many psalms. Moreover, the psalms were not all the same length, and since St. Benedict's device of dividing the longer ones was not allowed in the Roman office, it followed that the office on certain days was considerably longer. Pius X's idea was to remedy this inequality and make it possible to recite the whole psalter in the course of the week. In order to realize this idea, the revisers took the measures enumerated in the bull *Divino afflatu*, which became effective on January 1, 1913. The principles of the new reform may be reduced to five: (1) to shorten the offices, especially that of matins: in order to achieve this, they resorted to the process of division, first employed by St. Benedict, and even went so far as to divide the psalms into three, four, and even six parts, so that none might be more than fifteen to twenty verses in length. Moreover, they sacrificed the custom of the monks of the Thebaid,

1912; Mgr. Boudinhon, *La nouvelle disposition du psautier au Bréviaire romain*, in the *Revue du Clergé français*, January 12, 1922; Dom Guépin, *Un project précurseur de la réforme du Bréviaire, De ratione Breviarii romani monastici ejusque emendatione*, Paris, 1921.

which was to have twelve psalms each night: in the new reform, the ferial office has only nine psalms at matins; (2) to ensure the entire psalter being recited during the week: in order not to suppress any saints' feasts, the revisers chose a middle course: the ferial psalms were substituted for those of the common, a measure which was extended to feasts of the rank of doubles, and Pius X ordained that it should also apply to the offices within the octaves of feasts of the first class, except those of the five privileged octaves; (3) to safeguard the Sunday office: it was agreed that henceforth the Sunday office should not be ousted by a double major, and that it should only give place to a second-class double: some Sundays had a first-class privilege and could not be ousted by any feast, such as the first Sunday of Advent, the four Sundays of Lent, Passion Sunday, Palm Sunday and Low Sunday; (4) to do likewise in the case of certain privileged ferias: those which were so privileged that their office could not be ousted by any feast were Ash Wednesday, and the first three days of Holy Week. The other greater ferias without a privilege were the ferias of Lent, Advent, the September Ember days, and Rogation Monday: they took precedence of all offices of double or semi-double rank, in which case a commemoration of the feast was made at lauds and vespers; (5) to maintain against the encroachments of the common, the proper lessons from Holy Scripture: moreover, they were extended, in theory, at all events, to the majority of the feasts which were not at least doubles of the second class.

Votive offices were consequently suppressed: as also the additional prayers which had gradually been

attached to the daily office on certain days, such as the Litanies of the Saints, the gradual psalms, the penitential psalms, the Little Office of Our Lady, the Office of the Dead, even in the public recitation in choir. The Litanies of the Saints remained of obligation only on the feast of St. Mark and on the three Rogation Days.

In order to carry out the reform, therefore, the revisers divided the longer psalms, and did away with the repetition of the same psalms several times within the same week; the little hours and even compline have different psalms every day. By giving matins nine psalms, lauds four psalms and a canticle, vespers five psalms, three psalms to each of the little hours, and three psalms to compline, we get a total of thirty-three psalms every day, and of two hundred and thirty-one for the week. In order, therefore, to bring the number of one hundred and fifty psalms up to that of two hundred and thirty-one, the longer psalms had to be broken up into two or more parts. The general framework of the new distribution was modelled as far as possible upon the old: psalms i to cviii for matins; psalms cix to cl for vespers. To provide psalms for the other hours one or other of these two parts was drawn on. The number thus levied was larger in the new arrangement, in which all the hours had different psalms every day: thus in the old distribution only eighteen psalms were deducted from the one hundred and eight set aside for matins; the new has seventy-four psalms assigned either to lauds or to the little hours and compline. Thus the revisers contrived to secure an equal number of verses being said every day in the week, the minimum being three hundred and sixty verses

and the maximum four hundred and ninety-seven. The old Sunday office had a total of seven hundred and twenty-one verses, the Saturday office seven hundred and eighty-two or seven hundred and ninety-two.

The great innovation was that there were two sets of psalms for lauds, one for the time after Pentecost, the other for the seasons of Septuagesima and Lent, the ferias of Advent and common vigils: there was also a set of seven new canticles to be used on certain days instead of the older series. It will perhaps be regretted that the last three psalms from which lauds took its name should have been separated and even omitted on some days. But the revisers were careful to preserve the characteristic note of joy which has always been attached to this hour from the earliest times; the *Miserere* no longer appears except during penitential seasons. There are few changes to be noted in vespers, in which the ancient series of psalms cix to cl is found, always excepting the psalms set aside for other hours. The revisers paid particular attention to the hours of tierce, sext and none, which all have different psalms every day. Like those of lauds, these psalms have been chosen without regard to their order, simply because they seemed more appropriate to these hours. For compline, the revisers thought fit to surrender the time-honoured tradition which assigned certain fixed psalms to that hour, and to vary them as at the other hours, choosing those which seemed suited to the ending of the day.

Exceptions were made in the case of proper offices. Thus the feasts of Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost, retained the psalms assigned to

them by a time-honoured liturgical tradition; so also on the feasts of our Lady and of a certain number of saints, the psalter of the *Sanctorale*, so venerable in its antiquity, remained intact. The proper antiphons of certain feasts such as those of SS. Agnes, Agatha, Cecilia, etc., were retained. In the office of the last three days of Holy Week, no change was made, at all events, not in its general structure. The Office of the Dead on November 2 was given special treatment; since it ousts the office of the day within the octave of All Saints, it had to be completed: the Office of the Dead, as we know, had no provision for compline or the little hours. These hours on All Souls' Day were given appropriate psalms, and the lessons for the three nocturns were specially selected for it. The *Quicumque*, or Creed of St. Athanasius, was to be recited only on Trinity Sunday and on the Sundays after Epiphany and Pentecost, provided the Sunday office had been said without commemorating an octave or a feast of the rank of double.[1]

This reform of the psalter was a beginning only. The commission appointed by Pius X had on its programme the revision of the calendar, the saints' legends, the homilies and passages from the Fathers, etc.; there was also talk of a revision of the hymnal. Many years of patient labour will be required to complete this monumental work, after which nothing will remain to be done except to codify the new rubrics with a view to simplifying them.

[1] On the recitation of the *Quicumque*, see a note in L. Hébert, *Leçons de liturgie*, Vol. I, *Bréviaire et Rituel*, Paris, 1920, p. 160.

PART II

THE CONTENTS OF THE BREVIARY

We have, in the first part, considered the outward structure of the Breviary. The history of the formation of this book has shown how careful the holy Roman Church has ever been to improve and adorn what we may call the edifice of public prayer. We now have to consider the component parts of that prayer: we shall study them in themselves, then in their relation to one another, taking the latter first in general, and then in particular, in relation to the daily and to the annual *cursus*. This will form the subject-matter of the four following chapters: they will give us a proper appreciation of the value of the Breviary, of its beauty and its power to arouse and foster the spirit of prayer in men's hearts.

CHAPTER I

THE COMPONENT PARTS OF THE BREVIARY

I. The parts of the Breviary which are the voice of God: (1) Holy Scripture in the psalms; (2) Holy Scripture in the lessons. II. The parts of the Breviary which are the voice of the Church. (1) The patristic lessons and the homilies on the Gospel; (2) Extracts from the Acts of the martyrs and the legends of the saints.

THE voice of God, the voice of the Church, all our formulæ of prayer are the echo of one or other of these two voices; for they are taken either from Holy Scripture, which is the word of God, or they have been composed by the Church to whom God has entrusted the treasure of his teaching here on earth. For this reason the Breviary may be said fully to justify the title of the Divine Office and the Church's Office by which it is known.[1]

I. THE PARTS OF THE BREVIARY WHICH ARE THE VOICE OF GOD

In the psalms, lessons, and even in the antiphons,

[1] L. Bacuez, *L'Office divin et la vie de l'Eglise*, 6th ed., Paris, 1925, p. 17.

versicles and responsories, we continually come across passages taken from Holy Scripture. These books of Holy Scripture, which we call the Bible, were written by men, but under the inspiration of God, that is to say, under the action of the Holy Ghost, with his continual assistance and under his direct inspiration.

The idea of inspiration, which has been defined since Leo XIII,[1] implies as a consequence that the inspired book as a whole is at once the work of God and the work of man: God is its chief author, and man is the instrument whom God employs to commit to writing the truths he wishes to teach. Indeed, it is an immediate characteristic of inspiration to be an impulse and a motion emanating from God: its objective is the will of the writer, but in order to set that will in motion, God puts into his intelligence the thought of the book and its contents. Consequently, the divine impulse produces a threefold effect: it suggests to the intelligence, the thought of the book and the truths it is to contain; it determines the will of the writer to write the book and to put into it just what God wills; and it so directs the composition of the book that the writer exactly expresses all that God willed and nothing else. The truths which have been committed to writing under such conditions are indeed the word of God, and when we read them, we are the mouthpiece of God, who lends us his language to express his own thoughts, either in the writings of the Prophets, or in the canticles and psalms of the sacred singers of Israel. In the words of St.

[1] The encyclical *Providentissimus* and E. Mangenot, s.v. *Inspiration* in the *Dict. de théol. cath.*, Vol. VII, col. 2161.

Augustine: it is God who praises himself in order that he may be fitly praised by man. The Lord thus praises himself on earth, as he praises himself in heaven, in the way which best corresponds to his infinite greatness.

This holds good, even when we read the word of God, not in the language in which it was composed, but in the Latin of the Vulgate, which the Church has declared to be authentic. According to the opinion of theologians, this translation, however imperfect, is in conformity with the original text in all that concerns faith and morals, it acquaints us with the revelation God has given in the Scriptures. Such is the import of the decree passed by the Council of Trent, which at the same time took steps to have the Latin Vulgate printed with the utmost care and exactitude (1546).[1] Since then, the Church has taken steps to have this translation improved; not long ago Pope Pius X appointed a commission to undertake this work.

As for the subject with which we are concerned, namely, the Latin text of the Bible found in the Breviary, it may truly be said that the Holy Ghost inspires us with his thoughts and feelings in these formulæ, and even dictates the very words of our prayer. He who filled the soul of the Incarnate Word with the praise of God the Father, breathes his thoughts into the writings of the Prophets and his feelings into their psalms and canticles; he inspires the Church to use for her prayer the sacred text, and to enjoin its recitation on all her ministers.[2]

[1] Trochon, *Sainte Bible, Introduction générale,* Vol. I, p. 438.

[2] L. Bacuez, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

This is what we shall see in greater detail when we come to consider the part allotted to the sacred Scriptures in the psalmody and the lessons of the Breviary.

(1) *Holy Scripture in the Psalms*

It may be said that the psalms, of all books in the Bible, constitute the primitive and fundamental element of the Breviary; they are contained in it in their entirety and it has always been the Church's endeavour to so distribute them among the days of the week that they can be all recited between Sunday and Saturday. In adopting this practice, the Church followed the example of the Jews, who constantly used the psalms in the Temple at Jerusalem, in the synagogues, and on pilgrimage to the Holy City: it is easy to answer those who reproach her for having thus adopted the songs of a people isolated from all and contemptuous of other races, by saying that in doing so, the Church is only following the example of her Divine Master. Our Lord applied to himself the meaning of these psalms; proclaiming himself to be the son of David, he repeated them on all the great occasions of his life, at the Last Supper, on the Cross, and in his last moments: he thus extended their meaning so as to bring the story of Christianity in relation to them. It is therefore of the utmost importance that those who recite these psalms should grasp their full import, and should set themselves to study them as elements of prayer. Blessed Robert Bellarmin

observed to his sorrow that the clergy in his time had but a scanty understanding of the psalter. There is even less excuse for the clergy of our day if they incur the same reproach of ignorance. There is no lack of commentaries on the psalms from the liturgical view-point;[1] a careful and attentive perusal of a good commentary would enable them to say their psalms intelligently. The ideal thing would be for each to make for himself a collection of thoughts on the psalms. The Chronicle of Cluny (*Bibliotheca cluniacensis*, p. 599) has preserved the memory of a monk who had imposed this practice on himself. He always carried about on his person a gloss on the psalms, and if he came across a verse in the psalms he did not understand, he immediately referred to his notes.

A knowledge of the psalms requires at once some acquaintance with the men who wrote them, with the doctrine they contain, with the benefits to be derived from saying them, and with the text in which we use them. We may well say: the men who wrote the psalms. In virtue of their inspiration the chief author of the psalms is, of course, God himself, but in order to compose them, he chose several mouthpieces. It is now admitted that in order to form the whole collection of one hundred

[1] We may mention among the best: Bellarmin, full and devotional in his simplicity; Bossuet, who wrote an excellent dissertation on the psalms, with short, clear and valuable notes on each; Père Pacifique de Calais, in his treatise on the sacrifice of praise established by David under the Old Law, and sanctified and continued by Jesus Christ under the Gospel, Calais, 1740; Père P. Emmanuel, *Nouvel essai sur les psaumes* from the threefold view-point of the literal, spiritual and liturgical meaning, Mesnil Saint-Loup, 1869; H. Pérennès, *Les psaumes dans la liturgie romaine*, Quimper, 1925.

and fifty psalms, to the compositions of David were added: (1) some older compositions, psalm lxxxix, for instance, which begins with the words: *Domine, refugium factus es,* in which Moses sings of God's eternity and man's fleetingness; (2) other compositions later than David: Psalm lxxi, *Deus, judicium tuum regi da,* attributed to Solomon, although some commentators hold that it was written by David; (3) a certain number of psalms written by the sons of Core; (4) other psalms written after the captivity in Babylon. It is nevertheless true to say that David had the chief hand in the making of the psalter: it admitted that seventy psalms or thereabouts are by him. He is therefore in Holy Scripture and in tradition regarded and named as the personification of the psalter; he is its living, picturesque and attractive singer from the beginning to the end of his life: his poems bear the imprint of that period of his life when they were written: those of his youth reflect the consciousness and the assertion of his innocence, and his unbounded confidence in God's justice and goodness; after his accession to the throne, his psalms are stamped with a royal majesty; after his fall and his forgiveness, David still is trustful, but he manifests his resignation under all the evils which deservedly afflict him. On every occasion, however, he expresses in a most wonderful way, the feelings of all ages: the beauty of his poems had always been acknowledged; the writer of the book of Kings calls him the famous singer of Israel (2 Kings, xxiii. 1); the Fathers of the Church are unanimous in extolling him. If we regard the immediate object of his sacred songs only, David was as a rule inspired by the events of his own life, each of which fell from

his heart upon his mind, as the fingers of the musician strike the keyboard and call forth heavenly harmonies.[1]

The doctrine of the psalms is very varied: there have been many attempts to classify it; but the swift change of thought even within the same psalm make the process very difficult. If we take the predominant ideas, we can distinguish the *eucharistic* or thanksgiving psalms, such as viii, xvii, xviii; the *elegiac* or plaintive psalms, such as iii, v, vii; the penitential psalms belong to this category; the *didactic* or instructive psalms, such as i, xlviii, cxviii; the *prophetic* or *messianic* psalms, such as ii, xv, xxi; the *historic* psalms, lxxvii, civ, cv, etc. The idea which dominates David's whole life and gives unity to all his poems, is that of the God who sees, protects and guides him: if he sings of the glories of creation, it is to bless the great artificer who made them all in his might; if he recalls the glory of his ancestors, it is to praise the God who showed them such generosity and love; if he mentions his victories, it is to ascribe the glory of them to God; if he tells of his defeats, it is to humble himself beneath the hand which strikes him; if he laments his sins, it is to make amends to the God whom they offend before the whole world.[2] These songs make us realize that David was at once a man of action and of contemplation: his life was one of struggle, trial, danger, victory; sometimes he was crushed under the weight of his afflictions, sometimes he was raised up and exalted by the mighty hand of God; his psalms are the story of a man

[1] Mgr. Plantier, *Etude littéraire sur les poètes bibliques*, Paris, 1882, Ch. XXIII.
[2] Mgr. Plantier, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

whom God chose to be the prophetic type of the Messias and of the Christian.

David is the type of the Messias, for has not the Holy Ghost used the psalmist to depict the very Heart of the Incarnate Word? The psalter is, as it were, the translation of that high and universal prayer of which the Word made flesh is the source, and which he transmits to men's souls: St. Hilary, commenting on a passage in psalm liv. 9, says: "All that David suffered, all the laments he uttered, all was fulfilled in the sufferings of him who took our flesh."

David is also the type of the Christian, for he experienced his trials and felt his necessities; he addressed to God the fervent prayers which we have made our own. Whoever reads the psalms will find therein words which befit him as his own, as those which he himself has composed: whoever sings the psalms will repeat their words, not as if another were saying them, but as if he were expressing his own thoughts; he will refer to God all that they contain, as if he spoke of himself. These heaven-sent prayers are perfectly adapted to the needs of men of all ages; in this respect the psalms resemble the *Pater noster*.[1] Nature and grace have made David the true mouthpiece of humanity, praying, believing, hoping, loving.[2]

The devout use of the psalms is rich in benefits. Commenting on a passage in St. Augustine, Bossuet thus expresses himself: There is nothing more useful than the recitation of the psalms to strengthen

[1] St. Athanasius, *Ep. ad Marcellinum, P.G.* XXVII, col. 11-46.

[2] Haneberg, *Révélation biblique,* trad. Goschler, Part V, II, 12 in 8vo, Paris, 1856.

faith, excite hope and enkindle charity. David, that herald of God's dealings with man, steeped himself in the writings of Moses, and constantly refers to the history of the people of God, to its festivals, its sacrifices, its institutions. The psalms proclaim Christ and his Church; they are the food of hope; and though everything in them refers apparently to this life, nevertheless the psalmist tries to open our eyes to the spiritual joys of the world to come, and to make us secure against the adversities and pitfalls here below, since liberty, peace and joy will be the lot of all who dwell in the house of God and sing his praise. In enumerating his motives for loving God, David constantly recalls the divine perfections, wisdom, beauty, majesty, goodness, and above all, boundless mercy to sinners, and the thought of God's great love for him makes the psalmist lament that he loves him so little in return. He is also moved by the love of his fellow men and especially of his enemies: we have a proof of this in his attitude towards Saul, whose death he laments with bitter tears, and towards those who scorn him, like Nabal and Semei, or who persecute him, like his son Absalom. His songs do, it is true, contain curses uttered against his enemies, but his only end is to bring them to repentance, to overcome their obstinacy in evil,[1] and to induce them to cease from their crimes. And if the psalms do not contain so many moral precepts and maxims as the other books of Scripture, they nevertheless proclaim the great principles which should govern the life of the servant of God; they chiefly remind us of our duty towards God, of the love of God

[1] Bossuet, *Dissertation sur les psaumes, passim,* and St. Thomas, II-II, Q. LXXVI, art. 1.

which is its fundamental precept, of the observance of the divine law which instructs and sanctifies us, draws down all blessings upon us, and makes us find the true goal of life in God. While he emphasizes the liturgical aspect of this law, the sacred singer recalls the necessity of an interior worship of God, and of a pure and innocent life. It is, therefore, quite true to say that the psalms have always helped to foster devotion in men's souls; the Church has always actively encouraged her children to recite, study and meditate upon them. In former times, her ministers and religious were required to know them by heart; St. Ambrose could not understand how a Christian could let the day pass without having recited some part of them. Cardinal Wiseman wrote that the psalms contain well-nigh every sort of prayer, and express every feeling we can experience in our dealings with God, from the highest joy to the deepest grief. Whatever our dispositions may be, we can always find one of these sacred songs to harmonize with them; no human song can be so often repeated as these divine hymns; they remain for the heart eternally fresh, as the solemn melodies to which they are set are to the lips and ears. Both are composed to be used daily and hourly, without losing any of the charm which belongs to them. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the ages of faith, even the laity should have voluntarily bound themselves to recite the Breviary, as a whole or in part, simply because they felt drawn to the psalms. In the preface to a book of psalms printed in 1552, we read the following lines: " In sooth, I think there is no book under heaven which may compare with the psalter. Nay, if we had to beseech God in long

prayers and yearnings for a book containing the marrow of the Scriptures, and the choicest parts thereof, it could not be other than the psalter, or in all things like unto it."[1]

These remarks all apply to our Vulgate version, however imperfect it may be. We have already seen that for the Breviary St. Pius V enjoined the use of the Gallican psalter, the version which St. Jerome made in 392. Competent judges have discerned in it an admirable concision and energy, together with great charm: it is full of a tender piety and a rare potency which often makes itself felt in the very words. So says Bossuet in his *Dissertation sur les psaumes*;[2] the whole of the fifth chapter might be quoted with profit. The great bishop, in order to describe its charms, borrows the words of St. Ambrose.[3] The psalms are sweet to every age, and suited to either sex . . . when they are sung, the hardest hearts are softened, the most unfeeling shed tears, the most merciless are placated; in the psalms doctrine strives with grace, they are sung to delight, they are learnt to instruct; and what is acquired with pleasure is never blotted out of the mind.[4]

This is the anthology which forms the principal portion of the Breviary; it recurs at every hour of the Divine Office under the form of psalms, in most of the antiphons, versicles, responsories, etc.; the

[1] There are many authors, both sacred and profane, who witness to the value of the psalms. We may mention Lamartine, in *Voyage en Orient;* Lacordaire, in *Lettres à un jeune homme sur la vie chrétienne;* Mgr. Gay, *Vie et vertus chrétiennes,* Vol. II, p. 12, Paris, 1878.

[2] *Op. cit.*, Ch. V.

[3] *Praefatio in Ps. I*, n. 9, 10

[4] *P.L.* XIV, col. 925.

important place it holds required that we should dwell at some length upon it here. But it is not the only contribution Holy Scripture has made to the Breviary.

(2) *Holy Scripture in the Lessons*

The word of God is represented in the Breviary not only in the psalms but in the lessons as well. The use of Scripture lessons was established at an early date in the meetings of the Christians: it was copied from the practice of the synagogues. The Old Testament first, and later the New, found place in the night office, after the psalms had been sung: it was a means of giving life and variety to the recitation of the psalms. After having addressed God in his own words, the ministers of public worship listened to that God, heard his counsel, and heard the expression of his divine thoughts and will. Some member of the assembly filled the office of lector, and the sacred text, thus read aloud by one, imparted to the souls of his attentive hearers fresh light and fresh love. It was for this reason that the books of the Old and New Testaments were distributed over the course of the year. One would like to know the exact origin of the canon found at the beginning of the Breviaries which begins with the words: *Disce hoc scriptum quid sit, vel quando legendum.*[1] It must have been prompted by a state of things which

[1] The various editions of the Breviary give this canon at the beginning; for instance, that published by Mame in 1896, in two parts.

existed about the time of Gregory the Great or even earlier; St. Augustine already mentioned the reading of the Acts in Pascal time.

To the passages from the Old and the New Testaments assigned to each day in the year the name of *Scripture occurring* has been given: the days which do not figure in this list, such as the ferias of Lent, the Ember days, etc., are filled up with a homily on the Gospel. The Divine Office thus procures a precious advantage for us; it makes us read at least once in the year the most striking passages in the Bible. Moreover, on all great feasts, on those of our Lady and of the saints which have an office of three nocturns, the lessons of the first nocturn are always taken from appropriate passages in Holy Scripture. Thus we find extracts from the book of Ecclesiasticus, sometimes called the book of Wisdom, in the common of martyrs and confessors: the Canticle of Canticles supplies the lessons for the office of the Blessed Virgin. Moreover, the responsories which correspond to the first nocturn lessons are also taken from Holy Scripture: this is so on the Sundays of Advent and Lent and in a general way, in the office for ferias, during the months between August and November; a few responsories are taken from the Gospel, as on the ferias in Lent, for instance, from the Gospel of the Prodigal Son which is read on Saturday of the second week in Lent. These responsories are a sort of answer from the choir to the instruction given in the lesson: they record their impressions in the form of strophes and antistrophes. Their length has earned the name of *prolix* or longer responsories, in contradistinction to the brief responsories which follow the capitulum

at the little hours, as we shall explain in a later chapter.

To return to the lessons from Holy Scripture. Their presence in the Breviary, even in an abridged form, enables the clergy to read through the Bible every year, and at the time most likely to profit them. A holy religious, a Friar Minor from Aix, Jerome of St. Stephen, found a wonderful delight in them: "What delights me," he wrote, "in the Breviary, is that I see that it is always God who speaks, acts, God who commands, punishes, pardons, rewards, destroys, restores. It is indeed the book of God." And St. Vincent de Paul's words to some young clerics express the same thought: "The Divine Office is the school of all virtues. The master who teaches us in it is the Holy Ghost, the source of all truth; it is also the Prophets, Apostles, and Saints of God."

II. The Parts of the Breviary which are the Voice of the Church

The Church intervenes to decide what passages from the psalms should be said at the different hours of the Divine Office, and to assign the lessons from Holy Scripture: but she intervenes still more directly when she selects with due discrimination the extracts from the Fathers, the homilies, and the legends of the saints, the object of which is to explain the Scriptures, to give the mystical meaning of the feast which is being kept, and to name the benefits to be derived from the feasts in honour of the saints. This is the human aspect of the office, for although

the Church is assisted by the Holy Ghost in the choice of these instructions, she is nevertheless liable to err in attributing to a given author an extract which is not his.

(1) *The Patristic Lessons and the Homilies on the Gospel*

The extracts from the Fathers are found in the second nocturn of the feasts with nine lessons. From the twelfth to the sixteenth century the lessons of this nocturn were frequently taken from Scripture; the Council of Trent decreed that in future the second nocturn lessons were always to be taken from one of the Fathers or from the legend of the saint. The patristic lessons occur in the *Temporale* in the Sunday office, and also on the feasts of our Lord and of our Lady, and those of saints which have no historical legend, as, for instance, St. Anne, St. Joachim, etc. They also occur in the common of apostles, martyrs, confessors, etc.: except for some extracts from apocryphal writings, these lessons are chosen with due discrimination; they were revised by Paul IV, but were not touched by Pius X, although the fact that some feasts were reduced to the rank of simples has caused certain lessons to be suppressed.[1] These remarks also apply to the homilies or commentaries on the Gospel which are read in the third nocturn of nine lesson feasts. In order to form a correct idea of these lessons and their

[1] L. Hébert, *Notions de liturgie*, Vol. I, *Le Bréviaire*, p. 178.

literary merit, we must bear in mind an observation made by St. Augustine: he says that there is a beauty of form, a dignity of language, a sublimity of diction which are, so to speak, spontaneous, and are the natural outcome of great thoughts, strong convictions and glowing feelings. The Fathers often attain to this eloquence without intending to do so, without self-complacency and all unconsciously. We ought to add that the distinctive characteristic of the Fathers of the Church is found in their deep teaching, their serious thought, their fine feeling; and also in the charity, modesty and sincerity of their words, the light and warmth they diffuse, the unction with which they are filled and which they impart to those who read them. Some, no doubt, of the Fathers' interpretations, lack sufficient foundation; individually, each may err, but is liable to error as a body; these doctors, in their attempt to unveil the mysteries of the Scriptures, have charmed the greatest intellects, enlightened the ignorant, and convinced the most prejudiced.[1]

Following Bacuez, we will give a few details about the lessons taken from the Fathers and doctors of the Church, with certain reserves as to the number of lessons he assigns to each on account of the simplifying of feasts, and with some additional remarks on the mistaken attributions pointed out by recent critics.

(1) In the first place, we will enumerate the Greek and Latin Fathers from whom a small number only of lessons have been taken:

Greek Fathers. St. Athanasius (295-373), bishop of Alexandria, was the great champion of orthodoxy at Nicea; he devoted all his energy to vindicating

[1] Bacuez, *op. cit.*, pp. 180 and 194.

the dogma of the consubstantial Word: in the Breviary he has nine lessons, among them those for the sixth Sunday after Epiphany, from the second sermon against the Arians, in which he comments on the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews: those for the third Sunday in November are taken from the treatise *de Virginitate*, which is said to be wrongly attributed to St. Athanasius. St. Basil (330-379), the famous bishop of Cesarea, and one of the three great Cappadocian Fathers, is represented in the Breviary by thirteen lessons: on the fourth Sunday in Lent, he dwells on the importance of fasting in the Old Testament; on the fifth Sunday in November, commenting on psalm xxxiii, he gives a description of the last Judgment. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (313-350), who is known by his *Catechetical Discourses*, supplies three lessons on the Eucharist in the second nocturn of the octave day of Corpus Christi; St. Cyril of Alexandria (370-444) in the third nocturn of the same day has a homily on the Gospel of St. John. St. Epiphanius (315-403), bishop of Salamina in Cyprus, has nine lessons attributed to him in the Breviary; it appears that those in the second nocturn of the octave day of the Immaculate Conception are not by him, but by an Epiphanius Cyprius, who was bishop of Salamina in the ninth century. St. Germanus of Constantinople (635-733) wrote seven sermons on our Lady; the three lessons of the third nocturn on the feast of the Immaculate Conception are by him. To St. Gregory Nazienzen (329-389) the Breviary attributes nine lessons, among them those for the octave of the Epiphany, on the holy lights, and for the fifth Sunday in October, on the Machabees. St. Gregory of Nyssa (335-395)

supplies the second nocturn lessons on the Wednesday within the octave of the Ascension. St. John Damascene (676-760) is represented in the Breviary by fifteen lessons; among them are those for the second nocturn of the Assumption, the feast of St. Anne and of St. Joachim: the authenticity of his homilies on the Nativity of our Lady has been disputed; there is an interpolation about the tomb of the Blessed Virgin in the second homily which treats of the Assumption. St. Sophronius of Jerusalem (†638) supplies six lessons for the octave of the Immaculate Conception, on December 9 and 14, and St. Tarasius of Constantinople three for the fifth day within that octave.

Latin Fathers. On the octave day of the Dedication, we have three lessons by St. Felix IV (†530): it is an extract from the false decretal of the pseudo-Isidore, inserted in Gratian's decree. To St. Fulgentius of Ruspe (468-532) the Breviary attributes nine lessons. St. Isidor of Seville (†636) supplies three lessons for the common of doctors. St. Peter Chrysologus (406-452) has six lessons in the Breviary, on the eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost and on the feast of the Holy Name of Mary. Lastly, St. Thomas Aquinas (†1274) supplies four lessons for the feast of Corpus Christi, and three are attributed to St. Bernardino of Siena (†1444).

This brief list gives us a slight idea only of the extracts from the Fathers in the Breviary; we still have to mention the Fathers whose writings have been more copiously drawn upon. According to the number of lessons they are as follows: (1) St. Augustine (354-430), bishop of Hippo: to whom the Breviary attributes three hundred and sixty-three

lessons. Wonderfully gifted in mind, he studied in the best schools, fell into debauchery, and dabbled in Manicheism. At Milan he was converted by the gentle influence of St. Ambrose and his mother's prayers; returning to Africa, he was ordained priest in 391, and became first the co-adjutor and later the successor of the bishop Valerius at Hippo. The rest of his life was spent in combating heretics and schismatics, in instructing his people, in looking after his clergy and the entire Church.[1] From distant Africa, his influence extended to the whole of Christendom; he was the oracle of his contemporaries, the doctor of the Middle Ages: through him we enter into communication with Christian antiquity. He was a theologian, a philosopher, a moralist, an indefatigable controversialist, but it is his rare feeling that makes him the contemporary of all generations. . . . Never did any convert pray with such humility and compunction as Augustine after his conversion; his one desire was to love God. In the Breviary[2] his *Tractatus in Joannem* have been laid under contribution more than forty times in the third nocturn of the *Temporale* or of feasts: this exposition, which was taken down from sermons preached about the year 416, is remarkable for its theology and its mystical teaching. From his great masterpiece on the *City of God* are taken the second nocturn lessons for the eighth Sunday after Pentecost, the second Sunday in October and the fourth Sunday in November. There are also some extracts from his different treatises, from the *Enchiridion* on Septuagesima Sunday, from the *Contra mendacium*

[1] Tixeront, *Précis de patrologie*, p. 344.
[2] P. de Labriolle, *Histoire de la littérature latine chrétienne*, 2nd ed., Paris, 1924, p. 523.

on the second Sunday in Lent, etc. A number of homilies are taken from the great doctor's sermons: unfortunately, the Breviary contains many which are wrongly attributed to him: Dom Germain Morin, who promised some time ago to publish an edition of the writings of St. Cesarius of Arles, discovered among the sermons of St. Augustine several which belong to St. Cesarius (†543), one of the leaders of the Church of Gaul at the beginning of the Merovingian period;[1] for instance, the second nocturn lessons of the common of martyrs, those in the Dedication office, etc. (2) Next to St. Augustine, St. Gregory has supplied the most lessons for the Breviary: there are as many as two hundred and twenty. The forty *Homiliæ in Evangelia* are nearly all represented: they constitute a complete course of sermons for the year, and are the grave and intimate addresses of a father to his children; some lessons are taken from his exposition on the book of Job, called the *Morals* on account of their practical character. (3) About one hundred and eighty lessons in the Breviary are assigned to St. Ambrose (†397), a bishop whose teaching delighted St. Augustine by its sober vigour and its easy grace: most of these lessons are taken from the *Commentary on St. Luke*, a collection of homilies in which the moralizing note predominates; a few belong to the *de officiis Ministrorum*, a sort of moral synthesis in which it is not always clear whether the writer is legislating for the clergy or for the faithful in general. On the whole, this doctor is inspired above all by the wish to benefit men's souls. (4) This is

[1] Cf. various articles by Dom Morin on St. Cesarius in the *Revue Bénédictine*, Vol. X, pp. 62-71; Vol. XIII, p. 193 *seq.*; Vol. XIV, p. 243.

also the predominant tendency in the writings of St. John Chrysostom (†404), to whom one hundred and seventeen lessons are attributed: this master of sacred eloquence in the Eastern Church aimed above all at the instruction of his audience: he knew the life his people led and was fond of familiar illustrations and comparisons, and talked to his people like a father. (5) Of St. Jerome (†420) we have about one hundred and thirty lessons in the Breviary, taken for the most part from the discourses on the psalms, on Isaias, on St. Mark, etc.; these were intimate addresses delivered to the monks of Bethlehem or the neighbouring monasteries, and, as a rule, commented on the passages which had been read in the liturgical gathering. (6) Pope St. Leo the Great (†461), who in more ways than one resembles St. Gregory, proclaimed in express terms and on many occasions the universal power of the Roman pontiff, the successor of St. Peter; the discourse he delivered on this subject is among the seventy-five lessons assigned to him in the Breviary: the others are taken from his sermons on the feasts of our Lord, the Nativity, Epiphany, Ascension, and from his sermons on alms-giving, on fasting and on observance of Lent. (7) St. Bede the Venerable (†735) supplies fifty-seven lessons in the Breviary, St. Bernard (†153), forty-seven, the latter especially on the feasts of our Lady; then we have thirty-six lessons by St. Hilary of Poitiers (†368), eighteen by St. Maximus of Turin (†466), fifteen by St. Cyprian of Carthage (†258). As early as the eighth and ninth centuries, there were *homiliaria* or collections of homilies to be read at the office: this explains how it is that the writings of later Fathers do not appear in the *Temporale*, but only in the feasts of our

Lady and of those saints whose office was composed at a later date, or else in the commons of martyrs, virgins, confessors, etc.[1]

(2) *Extracts from the Acts of the Martyrs and the Legends of the Saints*

About the fifth century the custom arose of reading during the office the *Acta martyrum*, on the anniversary of their entrance into glory: the custom was even exaggerated, for all the lessons were devoted to them. It came about that, instead of restricting the reading to the authentic Acts, more lengthy biographies were drawn upon, which were intended to foster devotion, but at the cost of historical accuracy; [2] moreover, a great many Acts were destroyed under Diocletian, and anonymous writers composed new accounts with the aid of the oral tradition, but adorned with such details as they thought would encourage popular devotion. This led to difficulties, against which was directed, in the sixth century, the decree *de recipiendis et non recipiendis Libris*. This decree, which has been attributed to Pope Gelasius, forbade the use

[1] Dom Wintersig, *Die Vaterslesungen des Breviers, erste Abteilung*, Freiburg in Breisgau, 1925, gives the history of the lessons from the Fathers in the Breviary, a biographical sketch of those whose name appears at the head of each, with the Latin text of the lessons and a German translation; he restores to St. Cesarius the lessons wrongly attributed to St. Augustine. A full list of doubtful or erroneous attributions will be found in Dom Bäumer, trad. Biron, *Histoire du Bréviaire*, Vol. II, pp. 454-460.

[2] See Dom Ruinart, *Acta martyrum sincera*, Paris, 1689, Preface, art. 1.

of these compositions in the office of the Roman Church. Baronius remarks that this precaution was not always observed in other Churches, or even enforced in later times at Rome. Thus at the end of the eighth century, Pope Hadrian I wrote to Charlemagne that the reading of the Passions of the martyrs was allowed in church: these could be no other than the compositions we have just mentioned. This custom was kept up during the succeeding centuries: the Church prudently tolerated it in order to avoid rejecting as forged and spurious an account which might be true. While maintaining in her Breviary legends of the saints which have not this guarantee, the Church has never exacted a blind faith in the legends so inserted. Benedict XIV is explicit on this point: "It would be against the mind of the Church to maintain that it savours of impiety or even of heresy to call in question the historical facts contained in the Breviary; scholars are always free to point out whatever errors they think they have found in these accounts, provided that they do so with due modesty and for weighty reasons." [1] And the pontiff proceeds to enumerate points in the Breviary lessons on which scholars may exercise their wits, for instance, the Acts of St. Venantius, martyr, of St. Catherine, virgin and martyr of Alexandria, certain details in the legend of St. Clement, the identification of St. Denys the Areopagite with St. Denys of Paris, etc. From the practical view-point, when faced with the contested matter in the lessons of the Breviary, we simply have to await the decision of the Church: some corrections have already been made, thus in 1883, the Sacred Congregation of Rites deleted some

[1] *De canonizatione sanctorum*, lib. IV.

inaccuracies in the lessons of Pope St. Silvester. In time other corrections will be made, especially in the lessons of the popes, in reference to which Mgr. Batiffol wrote some little time ago that they contained details taken from the decretals of the pseudo-Isidore.[1] What the future reforms on this point will be, may be already presaged from the fact that Pius X's reform reduced a number of saints' feasts to the rank of simple, and so led to the suppression of their legends; moreover, the diocesan Propers in which the abuse of legends was more apparent, have to be submitted to Rome for approval, and this approval is not granted without certain preliminary deletions.

In some of the saints' feasts, especially in those of early saints, the compilers of their offices were not content to recount in the lessons only the circumstances under which these athletes bore witness to the faith, but used the same narrative to supply the antiphons and responsories. This was done, for instance, for St. Agnes, St. Agatha, St. Laurence, etc. The Church thereby sought to emphasize the characteristic features of their sacrifice, and to instil into us the lesson of generosity.

[1] *Bulletin critique*, 1892, Vol. XIII, p. 15.

CHAPTER II

THE GENERAL ORDERING OF THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE BREVIARY

In the arrangement of the various parts enumerated in the preceding chapter, the predominating idea is to present the formulæ of the Church's official prayer as an echo of our Lord's prayer during his earthly life: in the prayer before the Divine Office, *Aperi Domine*, we say: "Lord, in union with the divine intention with which thou didst on earth offer praise to God, I offer thee these hours." The word *hours* here denotes the different portions of the Divine Office, with which we shall deal in the next chapter. Consequently, we have:

(1) To make ourselves express our Lord's thoughts and feelings, especially in the psalms. Starting from the principle that the Church as a body and each of her members individually ought here on earth to be in close and continual contact with Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, the compilers of her public prayer wished it to be the continuation of the worship which Jesus Christ on earth offered to the Divine Majesty, and that in it should be offered the same homage, adoration and thanksgiving as his Son offered, and that the expression

of his thoughts and feelings should be repeated in the language inspired by the Holy Ghost. Thus the magnificent doctrine of the mystical body of Christ is realized, of which St. Paul treats in his Epistles: Jesus Christ, our head and our chief, pours into us his life; together with the Church and in the Church, we share in his merits, his satisfactions, his prayers; through him, the Christian adores the divine perfections, disarms the justice of an offended God, draws down the benefits of his infinite mercy; through him, the Christian is the child of God the Father, no longer merely in his quality as creature, but as an adopted son, filled with the grace which makes him like him who deigns to be called our brother; he receives the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in our souls as in his temple and asketh for us with unspeakable groanings.[1] It follows that the action of Jesus in the work of prayer becomes universal; he prays in all his members and for all his members. In his prayer, which is also the Church's prayer, are heard all notes at once: cries of distress and of repentance uttered in the name of sinners, songs of victory for the just who reign with him, allusions to the labours, sufferings and various phases of his earthly life, revelations of his glory in heaven. In one place he humbles himself under contempt and welcomes reproach; in another he protests his innocence, demands justice, threatens his enemies with the severity of his vengeance; in yet another place he gives thanks to God, thrills with joy, and sings hymns of gladness.

Thus the variety of sentiment and the apparent contradictions which are the most striking feature

[1] Rom. viii. 26.

of the psalms, are easily explained when one pictures to oneself Jesus Christ in all his fullness, in his personal unity and in his moral personality, as one sees his spirit diffused into and acting in all his members, and these members themselves united and identified with him. In his commentary on the psalms, St. Augustine constantly recalls the fact of our incorporation in Christ, and he thereby reconciles, in the person of Christ, the passages which seem to be in opposition: "Let us ever keep in mind," he writes, "that Jesus Christ is our head and that we are his members. Since we form one body only with him, is it not natural that we should have one heart, one voice, and that the mind and the cry of one should be the mind and cry of all?"[1] It follows that what is right and natural in our Lord would be inexplicable in anyone else. A large number of the prayers which the Church puts on the lips of her ministers would be unmeaning and impious, if they were to be understood only of themselves and said in their name only, and if they were not before God the echoes of a more exalted voice, the mouthpiece of him who is God and man, and as such not only the adorer of an unequalled majesty, the necessary mediator between heaven and earth, but also the representative of humanity regenerate, the interpreter and the high priest of all creation.[2]

Consequently, the priest, the monk or nun who recites the Breviary becomes an *alter Christus*:

[1] *Enarrationes in Ps. LXIX, P.L.* XXXVI, col. 866.
[2] Anon., *Principes sur l'intelligence des prophètes*, Ch. IX, quoted by Bacuez, *op. cit.*, p. 98 note. J. Duperray, *Le Christ dans la vie chrétienne d'après St. Paul*, 2nd ed., Lyons, 1922, pp. 31, 67 *seq.*

through the power of the Holy Ghost, whose mouthpiece they have made themselves, they reproduce and perpetuate in words authorized by the Church and often inspired by God, the homage of reverence, praise, entreaty and thanksgiving which our Lord gave to his Father during his earthly life, and which he continues to give him in heaven and in the sacrament of the Eucharist. In order to its due fulfilment, this function requires from the Incarnate Word on one side, and from his minister or mouthpiece on the other, close union, a certain identity of mind, thought, and affection, which will make it possible to say: "I pray, but in reality it is not I who pray, but Christ who prays in me; it is his spirit, his virtue, his grace which makes the whole value and merit of my prayer."

It is impossible to over-emphasize the solidarity which results from these considerations. The psalms, in particular, suppose dispositions which cannot be alien to any who recite them. The spirit expressed in the psalms is not the spirit of any one man in particular, but the spirit of all Christians, considered in their head, who unites and concentrates them all in his own person; it voices the dispositions which the grace of God worked first in Jesus Christ, the source and fullness of all supernatural life, and then, after and through him in all those whom he has incorporated into himself as his members in Holy Baptism; it voices our own dispositions, as well as those of David and all the just. It was then for us that the psalms were composed, it is we whom the Holy Spirit had in view when he inspired them in the beginning. In these psalms, he speaks of our dangers, depicts our struggles, laments our faults, and in touching and true words expresses

our repentance, our hope, our zeal, our love, our thanksgiving. We have then reason to recall St. Paul's teaching. All the faithful form but one body; since Jesus Christ the head communicates to all his members the same spirit and the same life, there must necessarily exist between them all community of feeling and identity of prayer: what one asks, not only does Christ ask it with him, but all other Christians ought to ask with him. It is a wonderful solidarity, in virtue of which the different members of the same body ought to assist one another, and all work for the good of each one as for the good of the whole body. This solidarity is represented by the dialogue and the plural form which the formulæ of the Breviary so constantly assume, and which must be used by those who recite the office privately, however strange this practice may seem at first sight.

(2) We have also in the due ordering of the formulæ and their distribution between the different hours of the day, to sanctify by prayer the main hours of the day and night. As one writer remarks,[1] at first sight this medley of psalms, antiphons, versicles, blessings, lessons and responsories seems fantastic and unaccountable; but closer scrutiny reveals a wonderful manifestation of the Church's wisdom. The Divine Office forms a perfectly ordered whole which has weighty reasons for its least details. To convince oneself of this one should consider the number of hours in the daily office. This number has been fixed at seven: (1) the Night Office, consisting of two parts, matins with one or three nocturns, and lauds, a succession of psalms

[1] Allioli, *Motives intrinsèques des heures canoniales*, quoted by Bacuez, *op. cit.*, p. 232 note.

and canticles in praise of God's creation, which manifests his perfection; (2) Prime, the portion of the office said at sunrise or at the first hour of the day in order to consecrate to God the first-fruits of a new day and to invoke his blessing on its labours and business; (3) Tierce, which consecrates the third hour midway between sunrise and midday; (4) Sext, which sanctifies the middle of the day; (5) None, the prayer for the ninth hour, midway between noon and sunset; (6) Vespers, with psalms and canticles like lauds; (7) Compline, the evening prayer before retiring to rest. These six hours together constitute the day office.

We may perhaps ask why there are seven and not eight, for lauds could be separated from matins as compline is from vespers; and as a matter of fact, they are so separated on Christmas night, when the midnight Mass comes between matins and lauds: Pius X in his reform sanctions the separation of the two hours by regulating how matins is to end whenever lauds are not said immediately after. The ancient custom, however, was to join one to the other in the public celebration of the Divine Office; in his *Rule*, St. Benedict only allows a short interval for the necessities of nature. The Church's plan, in thus spacing out the performance of the duty of prayer, was to remind us that every moment of our life belongs to God: the distribution of the hours is based upon the division of the day in our Lord's time. The night was then broken up into four watches of three hours each, nine o'clock in the evening, midnight, three o'clock in the morning, or cock-crow, and six o'clock in the morning. It was, however, thought necessary to allow proper time for sleep; the three nocturns were united and

assigned to the time nearest to six o'clock in the morning, or the hour for lauds. Prime did not exist originally; this hour was added about A.D. 362 in the monasteries, as we have explained elsewhere; it was the morning prayer and the first of the day hours, called the little hours, because the psalms were shorter and the lessons reduced to a mere capitulum. The hour of compline was introduced in the first half of the fifth century.

As for the number seven, the liturgists have sometimes given far-fetched and somewhat subtle reasons for it.[1] The affinities suggested do, however, offer some suggestive ideas, and Cardinal Bona will not suffer them to pass unnoticed. "Our forbears," he wrote, "in their ecclesiastical canons fixed the hours at which the Divine Office was to be performed; whence their name of canonical hours." There are hidden causes, symbolic reasons, and mysteries revealed only to the wise which support this arrangement, made with all due consideration and reflection. One of these mystical reasons is given by St. Cyprian:[2] "In the prayer made by the Three Children in the fiery furnace, those heroes of faith, victors in captivity, sanctified the third, sixth and ninth hour as a symbol of the Trinity which was to be revealed to later ages. The first hour touching on the third shows that the number of the Trinity is being made up; so with the fourth touching on the sixth, and the seventh on the ninth, thus realizing by a triple group of three hours a perfect Trinity. The worshippers of God, having appointed these hours with a spiritual meaning, observed them

[1] L. Bacuez, *op. cit.*, p. 258; Bona, *de divina Psalmodia*, cap. II, 1, in the *Opera*, Antwerp, 1677, p. 668.
[2] *de Oratione dominica*, *P.L.* IV, col. 537.

as the times of prayer. It was later perceived that the righteous of the old law prayed thus for mysterious reasons. For at the third hour of the day, the Holy Spirit came down in fulfilment of Jesus' promise; at the sixth hour, Peter was praying upon the roof of the house where he lodged, and was told by God in a vision that the time had come to admit all the Gentiles to salvation; at the sixth hour our Lord was crucified and washed away our sins in his blood; at the ninth hour, he won the victory by his Passion which redeemed us and restored us to life. Over and above these times which were of old kept and set aside for prayer, we have new ones which have also their symbolic meaning: thus we must pray in the morning to celebrate our Lord's resurrection; at sunset and at the end of the day we must again pray because Christ is the true sun and the true day; at the hour when the material sun and the material day are waning, we ask in our prayer that the light may again shine upon us and that the coming of Christ may win for us the grace of eternal light. Lastly, when night follows day, no harm can befall us, as long as we pray; for the children of light the day shines even during the night. And we, who are ever in Christ, that is to say, in the light, we must not desist from prayer even during the night." So wrote St. Cyprian.

The mediaeval liturgists added many other reasons to explain the symbolism of the number seven for the hours of prayer.[1] Cardinal Bona enumerates them and adds: "The number seven naturally recalls the principal benefits of God in the natural and

[1] Bona, *de divina Psalmodia*, p. 670 *seq.* Amalar, *de ecclesiasticis Officiis*, *P.L.* CV, col. 1101.

supernatural order, the creation or the work of the six days crowned by the rest on the seventh, the seven sacraments of the new law, the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, the seven theological and cardinal virtues:[1] this number also reminds us of the seven invisible enemies we have to battle against, the seven capital sins to which our fallen nature is ever inclining us. Lastly, the succession of the seven hours calls attention to the relation between the course of each day and the duration of our life: in the sight of God, our whole life is no more than a day, each has its beginning, progress, fullness and decline; night is the image of that darkness in which we were before we were born; lauds, said at dawn, symbolizes these early years when the reason begins to enlighten us; prime corresponds to youth, when the heart is at once so tranquil and so tender; tierce is ardent youth, full of impulses and boundless in its ambitions; sext corresponds to manhood, when a man is in full possession of his powers, and prudence and ambition are evenly balanced; none is the image of middle age, a prelude to the decline which comes too soon for our desires; the hour of vespers symbolizes old age, and compline, which is said in the dark, suggests the thought of death and of the grave. Some of these analogies are expressed in the hymns; for instance, at prime we have the verse *Ut cum dies abscesserit*, at none the verse *Largire lumen vespere*, and others in the hymns at the night office on ferias."

We might also mention the division of the daily office into seven different hours with the intention of honouring the seven principal scenes in the

[1] Honorius of Autun, *Gemma animæ*, *P.L.* CLXXII, col. 628.

Passion of our Lord. Some mnemonic verses found at the beginning of many Breviaries run thus:

Matutina ligat Christum qui crimina purgat;
Prima replet sputis; causam dat tertia morti;
Sexta cruci affigit; latus ejus nona bipartit;
Vespera deponit; tumulo completa reponit;
Haec sunt septenis propter quæ psallimus horis.

We ought, however, to remark at this point that we must not mistake the effect for the cause; it was not because seven scenes could be distinguished in our Lord's Passion that the Divine Office was divided into seven different hours; it was rather the desire to refer each hour of the office to some part of the Passion which caused seven particular incidents or seven principal sufferings to be selected. The custom is a pious one, and no doubt a help to devotion in reciting the office: yet we must admit that it would need some effort to apply it on such feasts as the Nativity or Ascension of our Lord, Pentecost, etc. In his opusculum entitled: *de sex aliis Seraphim*, St. Bonaventura has slightly altered this method: he advises us to recite the night office in honour of our Lord's Nativity, tierce in honour of the Holy Ghost and his descent upon the Apostles, vespers in thanksgiving for the institution of the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper.

A practical consequence of these reflections on the division of the Divine Office is that it is important to recite the hours in their natural order and as far as possible at the time of day most suitable for them. A punctual exactness in this respect is not difficult for monks whose rule binds them to the public celebration of the office; but it encounters serious obstacles in the exercise of the sacred ministry, when it has to be recited privately. But it

is still possible to bear these times in mind, and good priests make it a duty to do so by having a fixed hour for saying their office: they join together the hours which have a natural connexion and divide the Divine Office into three nearly equal parts: they say matins and lauds overnight, the four little hours in the morning, and vespers and compline soon after midday.

(3) Lastly, we have, in the ordering of the component parts of the Breviary, to bring them into relation with the mysteries of our Lord's life, and especially with the celebration of the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

While it helps us to praise God at the most important times of the day, the manner in which the hours of the office are distributed also enables us to unite ourselves to our Lord's dispositions, for we are his mouthpieces when we recite the Church's official prayer. According to Monsieur Olier[1] these dispositions are reducible to two principal ones: the religion by which he praises the Father and pays homage to his perfections; and the love for his Church which urges him to beg for all his members the fullness of the divine life. The former disposition stands out alone in the night office, the latter predominates in the lesser hours, while both express themselves almost equally in the evening office. It follows that the night office is properly the sacrifice of praise, an echo of the worship which the heavenly choirs offer to the Divine Majesty (particularly in the invitatory and the *Te Deum*); we must keep ourselves in their presence and make their sentiments

[1] *Mystères de Notre Seigneur appliqués à la journée,* an unpublished manuscript quoted by Bacuez, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

our own. The morning office (or the little hours—the psalm formerly said at these hours, psalm cxviii, was quite in this key) relates directly to this life; we ask for the dispositions necessary for our journey through this life, for the destruction of sin and the increase of the Christian life; the night office offers to our contemplation the glory our Lord enjoys in heaven with those of his members who await the day of judgment which will crown their bliss (this appears in the psalms for vespers on Sunday more particularly). It ought to excite our desires and make us long for the life in the world to come. As we study the special distribution of the parts of the Breviary in its annual course, we shall see better how the recitation of the Divine Office makes us enter into the different mysteries of our Lord's life.

Before closing this chapter, it will be interesting to note the close connexion which exists between the hours of the daily office and the holy sacrifice of the Mass. It was once pointed out that the hour of lauds might be regarded as the morning sacrifice, and the hour of vespers and the evening sacrifice, the two sacrifices of praise offered to God daily under the old law. But that is not all: the affinities which unite the Divine Office to the sacrifice of the new law are interesting from another point of view. They both tend to the same end, namely, the glory of God and our salvation procured in the Church by our Lord. Holy Mass is the centre of the daily office, in the more material sense that in the celebration of the choir office, as said in cathedrals, collegiate churches and monasteries; the chapter or conventual Mass is sung either after tierce, on Sundays and feasts above the rank of semi-doubles,

or after none, on simples and on ferias; thus the Divine Office is the daily setting of the Mass. In a deeper sense, modern liturgists have shown that the whole of the canonical office was evolved from the vigil (that is to say, the night office comprising matins and lauds), and this office itself originated in eucharistic sacrifice; it is simply a development or extension of the introductory part of the Mass or the Mass of the catechumens: in the former, the psalmody is represented by the gradual, the tract, the *alleluia*, in the latter, it is more fully developed in the psalms at matins and lauds: the reading, which in the night office is more developed, but reduced to a capitulum at lauds, in the Mass of the catechumens is represented by the Epistle, and on certain days by a lesson from the Old Testament, for instance, on Wednesday of the Ember days. It must also be noted that the capitulum of lauds is at the present day the beginning of the Epistle at Mass.[1] There is yet another consideration that we can profitably make: our Lord in the tabernacle ever offers to his Father the thoughts of his mind and the feelings of his heart conformably to the four ends of the sacrifice; similarly, in singing or reciting the office of the day, the priest and the monk continue the interior acts of our Lord's soul by using the official forms of the Church's prayer.

[1] See the concise account in Bacuez, *op. cit.*, p. 516; A. Vigourel, *Le Canon romain de la messe et la critique moderne*, Paris, 1915, pp. 89-92; Dom Cabrol, *Le Livre de la prière antique*, Paris, 1900, pp. 83-84.

CHAPTER III

THE ORDERING OF THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE BREVIARY WITH SPECIAL RELATION TO THE DAILY CURSUS

(1) The prayers before and after the office; (2) the short invocations. I. The ordering of the various parts of the night office : (*a*) matins; (*b*) lauds. II. The ordering of the various parts of the day office : (*a*) prime; (*b*) tierce, sext and none; (*c*) vespers and compline.

In this chapter we have to study in detail the different hours of the Divine Office which we enumerated in the preceding chapter: we shall do so under two heads: (1) the night office; (2) the day office. But we must first mention the elements common to all the hours, in order not to have to revert to them. They are:

(1) *The prayers before and after the office.* At the beginning of the Breviary we find the prayer *Aperi:* it is not part of the office, and is not prescribed, but merely counselled; it is intended to obtain the grace of driving away distractions during the office, of ensuring continuous attention to what one is saying, and of uniting one's intention to that of our Lord in his prayer on earth. An indulgence of one hundred days is attached to its recitation.

Then follow some prayers which must be said inaudibly: *Pater noster* and *Ave*, at the beginning of each of the hours, except when lauds follows matins immediately. The *Credo* is added before matins and prime. At compline, it suffices to say the *Pater noster* after the short lesson at the beginning. The recitation of these prayers, which became universal after the thirteenth century, was made obligatory by St. Pius V. A special rubric indicates what is to be done at the office of Tenebræ and at the Office of the Dead. Since the canonical hours are a lengthy development of the *Pater noster*, it is natural that this prayer should be found at the beginning, as a sort of summary of all we have to ask of God.[1] The *Ave*, which did not get its final clause, *Sancta Maria*, until the beginning of the sixteenth century[2] reminds us that Mary is our model in our union with Jesus in the act of prayer. The *Credo* at the beginning of the office is an invitation to arouse our spirit of faith. The same prayers recur at the end of compline, and Pius V. made them obligatory. One must also say a *Pater noster* at the end of each hour unless it is immediately followed by another hour.

(2) *The short invocations at the beginning and end of the hours.* Those at the beginning are omitted on the last three days of Holy Week and in the Office of the Dead: with these exceptions, the hour of matins begins with the versicle: *Domine, labia mea aperies*, the sign of the cross being made on the lips while saying it, in order to obtain purity of heart and the grace of prayer. The *Deus in*

[1] Bona, *de divina Psalmodia*, Ch. XVI, pp. 810 *seq.*
[2] Vacant Mangenot, *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, s.v. *Angélique* (*Salutation*), Vol. I, col. 1273.

adjutorium with the doxology: *Gloria Patri* is said not only at matins, but at the beginning of every hour, while the sign of the cross is made to show our trust in the Cross of salvation. This opening verse of psalm lxix was used by the monks of early times; they said it frequently throughout the day as an ejaculation: it is a rampart against the onslaughts of the devil, a preservative against pride in prosperity, a reminder of our frailty, as well as an act of resolute trust in the divine assistance. The *Gloria Patri*, an act of homage to the three persons of the Blessed Trinity, which constantly recurs at the end of the psalms, and under another form at the end of the hymns also, is also an invitation to lead a good life, for according to St. John Chrysostom, to praise God with the lips and to lead an evil life would be the greatest insult to the Divine Majesty. The *alleluia* is an invitation to all creatures to join us in praising God: the formula *Laus tibi, Domine*, which is substituted for it during Septuagesima and Lent, has the same import. At the beginning of compline, after the *Confitebor*, is said first the versicle: *Converte nos*, while making the sign of the cross on the breast, to show that after humbly acknowledging our faults, we ought to turn to God in our hearts.

The invocations said at the end of the hours are: (1) *Benedicamus Domino*, a kind of dismissal, like that which ends the Mass, in order to show that even outside the hours of prayer, we ought always to praise God: it is said at all the hours after the *Dominus vobiscum* which follows the collect. (2) *Fidelium animæ* is said after the *Benedicamus Domino* except at prime and compline: it is thought that this addition dates from the time when Pius V

suppressed the obligation of saying the Office of the Dead in addition to the office of the day. The *Fidelium animæ* is omitted: (*a*) from Maundy Thursday to Holy Saturday: it is said only in the private recitation of the vespers of Holy Saturday; (*b*) after vespers and lauds of the day when they are immediately followed by the Office of the Dead; (*c*) on Christmas night before the midnight Mass, and after tierce before the pontifical Mass. (3) *Dominus det nobis suam pacem.* This versicle with its response: *Et vitam æternam. Amen,* is said at the end of the hours when the antiphon to our Lady is to follow. At compline, however, this antiphon immediately follows the formula *Benedicat et custodiat,* which is the blessing given by the father of the family at the end of the day.

The final antiphon to our Lady, the recitation of which dates from the thirteenth century, was prescribed by Pius V to make up for the daily recitation of the office of our Lady. It is of obligation: (*a*) at the end of compline, immediately after the blessing, even when matins of the next day is to follow without an interval; (*b*) at the end of lauds, after *Fidelium animæ, Pater noster, Dominus det,* unless another hour is to be said, when it is deferred until the end of that hour; (*c*) in the public recitation of the other hours, if the religious leave the choir immediately after: it is omitted when the Mass follows or when the Office of the Dead or the Litanies of the Saints are to be said. The versicle *Divinum auxilium* must follow the antiphon to our Lady.

I. The Ordering of the Various Parts of the Night Office

(*a*) *Matins*

We distinguish in this office, the invitatory, the hymn, the psalms, the lessons and the responsories.

The Invitatory and Hymn.—The invitatory, which stands at the beginning of matins and of the entire office, is a solemn exhortation to praise God: it is repeated in whole or in part after the divisions of psalm xciv: *Venite exultemus.* In choir this invitatory is often sung in order to emphasize the joy with which we ought to repeat God's praises: it is, as it were, the voice of the Church in heaven inviting the Church on earth to a common worship. Psalm xciv, a development of the refrain, draws our attention to Jesus Christ, our head, calling on all his members to praise God; it depicts the works of God, awakens in the mind the two dispositions of faith and love, and inspires a strong desire to praise God as he merits, and a strong fear of doing so carelessly, or inattentively. This beginning is a vestige of the old way of singing the responsorial psalms: a cantor sang the refrain, which was taken up by all, the soloist then sang the verses and paused from time to time to give the choir an opportunity to repeat the refrain, either in part or as a whole. The invitatory is omitted on the feast of the Epiphany because the psalm *Venite exultemus* appears under the responsorial form in the third nocturn; it is also omitted on the last three days of Holy Week because all joy is then banished from the office; and also from the Office of the

Dead, except on All Souls' Day, and when the three nocturns, or one only, are said as a double.

After the invitatory comes the hymn. We need not now revert to the introduction of hymns into the Roman office: we will only say that at matins and at the little hours, the hymn precedes the psalms, whereas at lauds, vespers and compline, it follows them. At the little hours and at compline, the hymn is the same every day, except at tierce during the octave of Pentecost, when we have the *Veni Creator*. The hymn generally indicates the character of the hour to which it belongs: at matins, in the office of the time, the hymn varies according to the season: it is found in the psalter: there is a different one for every feria; the hymn for feasts is given in the proper of the time and sums up the mystery which is being celebrated in a striking way: the hymns for the feasts of saints are given either in the proper or in the common. Special rules decide what transpositions are to be made when the historical hymns follow on one another at lauds or at vespers. The diocesan Ordo gives the rules for special cases.

The Psalms.—We have already seen that Pius X's reform completely redistributed the psalter at matins on Sundays and weekdays: the new arrangement of the psalms has also brought about changes in the antiphons. When saying the Sunday or ferial office, one simply has to follow the instructions given in the new Breviary. The only rubrics we intend to give here refer to the feasts in the *Sanctorale*. In the Breviary as revised by Pius X these feasts fall into two categories: (1) feasts of first or second class which have for their object our

Lord, our Lady, the Holy Angels, St. John Baptist, St. Joseph and the Apostles; (2) all other feasts of any rank from a double major down. The feasts in the first category have retained their proper office and psalms, consequently the psalms at matins are taken as before, either from the proper or from the common. The feasts in the second category have a mixed office, that is to say it is taken partly from the ferial and partly from the saints' office. Thus, the antiphons and psalms at all the hours are from the ferial office: at matins, therefore, whether the feast has nine or three lessons, the antiphons, psalms, and the versicles after each nocturn are all of the feria: if the feast is one with three lessons the nine psalms of the feria are said without a break, omitting the versicles of the first and second nocturns; if the feast has nine lessons, the grouping of the psalms into three groups of three is retained. If it happens that some of the doubles, such as the feasts of St. Agnes, St. Agatha, St. Martin, St. Cæcilia, etc., have proper antiphons at matins, they are used instead of those given in the psalter. During Pascal time, the psalms of each nocturn are said under a single antiphon. Days within the privileged octaves (Easter, Pentecost, Epiphany, Corpus Christi) take the psalms of the feast; those within common octaves have three nocturns and take the antiphons and psalms of the feria at all the hours. The invitatory, hymn, capitulum, versicles, and collect at all the hours are those of the feast, unless the octave has some proper pieces. This new decision about the psalms at matins could be made without difficulty, for before and after Pius X's revision, the psalms of the night office bore only a

distant relation to the office, both in the *Temporale* and in the *Sanctorale*. The psalms are taken one after the other from i to cviii, with but few exceptions. It is the lessons and the responsories which give the office of matins its special character each day.

The Antiphons and Versicles.—The antiphons which accompany the psalms are intended to rest the mind and to give variety to the office: on great feasts, they call attention to the mystery celebrated; on lesser feasts and on ferias, they bring out the passages in the psalms which more directly relate to the office and are a key to the other verses. Their object is, therefore, analogous to that of the invitatory, which expresses the leading idea. In the ferial office they are taken from the psalms, and were to a great extent chosen by St. Gregory the Great: after the new distribution of the psalms under Pius X, some had to be altered, for instance, those for the third and fifth psalms at vespers on Sunday.

The versicles are short aspirations or maxims in keeping with the office which is being celebrated: these versicles are in two parts, the first being said by one or two cantors, the second by the whole choir. The text is taken from the psalms or from some other part of Scripture. There is a versicle at the end of each nocturn, after the hymn at lauds and vespers, after the brief responsory at the little hours and at compline: it is a sort of link between the psalms proper and the lessons or other chants. The same versicle is often repeated several times in the office; thus the versicle of lauds recurs at tierce, that of none at second vespers, and that of the third nocturn at sext.

The Lessons and Responsories.—Except at Tenebræ and in the Office of the Dead, each set of lessons is preceded by an absolution, each lesson by a blessing. At the end of each nocturn, the *Pater noster* is said inaudibly, and the presiding ecclesiastic recites a formula intended to remove the obstacles which would prevent us from benefiting by the reading: this formula is called the absolution. The meaning of the word is not clear: it may be taken to mean the prayer which ends the psalmody, or else an invocation to obtain pardon for our sins. Originally it does not seem to have been distinguished from the blessing: the present formulæ do not apparently go back beyond the thirteenth century: the one who is to read the lesson says: *Jube, Domne, benedicere,* and the presiding ecclesiastic replies with a shorter formula, the blessing. A rubric prescribes which blessings are to be said on feasts of nine lessons, and which on feasts of three lessons. These formulæ have a reason and manifest meaning when the office is publicly recited, for the distinction of persons and the variety of their functions make the office a kind of dialogue in action, but in private recitation they appear less natural. The Church, however, will not have them omitted, for they serve to keep the priest who recites his office privately in union with all his brethren who perform the same function. The conclusion: *Tu autem, Domine* . . . is invariable, and inspires the reader with the humility with which he ought to receive the divine teaching.

In the following chapter we shall have to revert to the content of the lessons and responsories. Here we need simply say that, in the *Sanctorale*, all

the feasts in the first category (as given above) have proper lessons; the feasts in the second category take some of their lessons from the *Temporale*. In the *Temporale* itself, the Sundays and ferias throughout the year have proper lessons. Those of the first nocturn are always taken from Scripture, both from the Old and the New Testament. The passages or pericopes allotted to the proper of the time as lessons for the Sundays and ferias of the liturgical year are known as the Scripture occurring. There are pericopes for the whole year through, except during Lent, on Ember days, Rogation Monday, the vigil of the Ascension, and the octave of Corpus Christi. The general rule is these lessons shall be recited at the first nocturn of every feast of nine lessons: the exceptions are: (1) offices which their rank as feasts of first or second class, or their importance entitles to proper lessons, for instance, the feasts of our Lord or of our Lady, of the Holy Angels, St. John Baptist, St. Joseph, the apostles and evangelists; (2) offices which have proper lessons, for the first nocturn, that is, historical lessons which explain the object of the feast, or name the saint whose feast is being kept, for instance, the feasts of St. Stephen the Protomartyr, the Invention of his Body, the Conversion of St. Paul; or again, lessons assigned to a saint, for instance, St. Leo the Great, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Joseph Cupertino, the Stigmata of St. Francis; (3) offices which have proper responsories for the first nocturn without proper or appropriated lessons, such as the offices of St. Agnes, St. Agatha, etc.: they take their first nocturn lessons from the common. This does not happen, however, on the feasts of SS. Lucy, John and Paul, Clement, because their proper first nocturn

responsories are relegated to the second nocturn, where they take the place of those from the common; (4) offices which fall on a day which has no Scripture occurring, for instance, on Rogation Monday; these take their first nocturn lessons from the common, unless it happens that the Scripture lessons have to be made up or anticipated. But these exceptions and others still more infrequent are indicated every year in the Ordo for the diocese.

The beginning of every book of Scripture must be read every year; if it cannot be read on the day appointed it is relegated to some other day. This *incipit* usually is assigned to a Sunday; it is relegated to the first free feria, and not anticipated during the preceding week unless the Sunday office itself is anticipated. We also find *incipit* on certain ferias, for instance, after Epiphany, during Pascal time and at the end of November: these *incipit* must be said on the appointed day; if they cannot be said on that day they must be said on the first day free within the week, even if the *incipit* of three different books have to be read on that day. If there is no free day in that week, they are anticipated on the first free day of the week immediately preceding. If necessary, the proper lessons of a semi-double, double or double-major may be omitted. The incident of Eleazar and the seven Machabees on the fifth Sunday in October is assimilated to an *incipit*, and its beginning must always be read every year.

As ordinary ferias have three lessons only, we need not consider their second and third nocturn lessons. The Sunday office always has three nocturns and nine lessons: those for the second nocturn are taken from the Fathers; as a rule they bear some relation to the first nocturn lessons and

give a commentary on them: those for the third nocturn are taken from a homily on the Gospel read at the Mass of the Sunday. The old Roman custom was to read the whole of this Gospel at matins (in the Benedictine office this reading follows the *Te Deum*); but since the time of Charlemagne, only the first few lines have been read, concluding with the words: *et reliqua.*

In those of the saints' offices which have nine lessons, the second nocturn ones are a summary of their life, but if this summary does not run to three lessons, the others are taken from the common. The legends of the early popes are taken from the *Liber pontificalis,* a collection of biographical notices of the popes down to the ninth century; these legends were revised by Baronius and Bellarmin, who cut out some passages. For the other saints, the second nocturn lessons have been taken from the legends available at the time when the office was composed: we have already stated that they are open to correction. Since many saints' feasts have been cut down to three lessons, the abridged legend becomes the third lesson, the first two being from the Scripture occurring.

The responsories at matins represent the oldest form of Church music we possess, both the text and the chant having been revised by St. Gregory the Great. According to Rupert of Deutz, they are called *responsoria* because their meaning answers the lessons; according to St. Isidore of Seville, they are so-called because the chanting of the choir alternates with the lessons.[1] In any case, we can

[1] Rupert of Deutz, *de divinis Officiis,* P.L. CLXX, col. 18; St. Isidore of Seville, *de ecclesiasticis Officiis,* P.L. LXXXIII, col. 741.

discern a close relation between the lesson and the responsory which follows it. The verse at the beginning was sung first by one cantor and then taken up by the choir; the next verse was said by the cantor only; the choir then repeated the whole of the responsory; then came the doxology: *Gloria Patri*, said by the soloist, after which the choir repeated the beginning of the responsory. The *Gloria*, therefore, figured in all the responsories. In Gaul, in Amalar's day, only one verse was recited, the doxology was not said except in the last responsory of each nocturn,[1] and instead of repeating the whole of the beginning, the last words only were taken up. This is the form under which the responsories are said nowadays. The *Gloria Patri* appears only at the end of the third responsory in each nocturn, or at the end of the second responsory of the third nocturn, when the *Te Deum* is to be said. In the office for Passion-tide there is no *Gloria Patri*, so the whole of the third responsory is repeated; in the Office of the Dead the *Gloria Patri* is replaced by the *Requiem æternam.*

The antiphons on great feasts are intended to fix the attention on the mystery which is being celebrated; on lesser feasts and on ferias, they bring out the passages of the psalms which relate to the office. In the common of saints, which has three nocturns, the first nocturn shows the saint in his vocation, the type on which God willed to model him; the second shows him as he lived on earth, the manner in which he responded to God's designs for him; the third inspires us to consider the glory into which he has entered. The antiphons often

[1] Amalar, *de ordine Antiphonarii P.L.* CV, col. 1248.

adapt themselves very happily to these three states.[1]

The *Te Deum*, which certainly dates from the fourth or fifth century (it is no longer attributed to St. Ambrose or to St. Augustine, but to Nicetas of Remesiana; another theory is that it is a preface or an anaphora of very early date), appeared early as a conclusion to the nocturns of the night office, though not every day nor in any regular manner. St. Benedict put it after the last responsory of the nocturns on Sunday; at Rome in Amalar's day it was said only in the office of canonized popes; in the eleventh century, according to the *Micrologus*, it was said on feasts of nine lessons and on all Sundays, but not during Advent, Septuagesima, Lent or Passion-tide. In the Roman Breviary, the *Te Deum* is now said after the ninth lesson in place of the responsory: (1) on all Sundays, except during Advent, and from Septuagesima to Easter; (2) on the ferias of Pascal time, except on Rogation Monday; (3) on all feasts of nine or of three lessons, except that of the Holy Innocents, unless it falls on a Sunday, or is kept as a feast of the first class; (4) on days within an octave or on the octave day, and lastly, in the Office of our Lady *in Sabbato*.[2] The writers who have studied the relations between the office and the Mass, here very pertinently remark that the presence of the *Te Deum* in the office involves that of the *Gloria in excelsis* at the Mass. It has been said of the *Te Deum* that it is an out-pouring, a burning poem unfettered by any metre, a divine dithyramb born of enthusiasm, soar-

[1] See the examples given in Bacuez, *op. cit.*, pp. 281 *seq.*
[2] L. Hébert, *Leçons de liturgie*, Vol. I, *Le Bréviaire*, p. 18.

ing on its own wings, disdaining all the resources of art. I doubt whether faith, love and gratitude have ever uttered a truer or more poignant language.[1]

(*b*) *Lauds*

This morning office is one of the most solemn, and in its structure, is analogous to vespers: thus it has five antiphons and psalms (or a canticle from the Old Testament), a capitulum which represents the lessons in the night office or the Epistle at Mass; a hymn, in which many liturgists see the equivalent of the responsory (this responsory still exists in the Benedictine office before the hymn: it is surprising that the Roman office should have dropped it at lauds and vespers and have retained it at the little hours); the canticle from the Gospel, *Benedictus* at lauds, *Magnificat* at vespers, is a parallel to the Gospel in the Mass of the catechumens; it is noteworthy that the antiphons of these two canticles are taken from that Gospel; a suffrage or invocation of the Cross or of the Saints when the office is a semi-double or a simple, and the *preces feriales* in the latter case: these are the analogies and points of contact between lauds and vespers. We may add that on great feasts, although the psalms are different, the antiphons are the same at lauds and at vespers.

The name of lauds was originally given to the

[1] J. de Maistre, *Soirées de Saint Pétersbourg*, Entretien VII. Card. Wiseman in the *Dublin Review*, November, 1842.

last three psalms, cxlviii to cl, which ended the psalmody and were sung or said under a single *Gloria* and antiphon: the term soon came to denote the whole office, when the name *matutinæ laudes* was dropped. This hour, which seems to have been detached from the night office, was intended to sanctify the first hour of the day, the rising of the sun, to commemorate the moment when our Lord rose from the tomb: it resembled the ancient morning sacrifice which was a prelude to the eucharistic sacrifice.[1] The psalms were especially chosen to instil into us our Lord's sentiments towards the Divine Majesty, both on the day of his Incarnation and Nativity, and at the beginning of his glorious life on the day of his Resurrection. Up to the time of Pius X, there were different groups of psalms at lauds; such as those in the third place, psalms lxii and lxvi under one antiphon and *Gloria*, and psalms cxlviii to cl in the fifth. In Pius X's revision, these groups disappeared, psalm lxvi was relegated to Tuesday lauds, psalms cxlix-cl to Saturday lauds; but on Sundays as on weekdays, the psalms have been divided into two sets, the second set being used during penitential seasons, Advent, Septuagesima and Lent. The first set for Sunday is also used on feasts of first and second class: they breathe joy and gladness, and include psalm xcii, a real song of praise, for the twofold wonder of creation and the redemption of the world, an outburst of joy at the thought of all God has done for man; psalm lxii, a sheer transport of divine love which forms a fitting prelude to the song of the Three Children; psalm cxlviii which is a sort

[1] Bona, *de divina Psalmodia*, Ch. V, p. 709.

of echo of the sentiments expressed in the preceding psalm. The second set of psalms for Sunday substitutes for the first two psalms the *Miserere*, which appears in the same place every day throughout the week, and psalm cxvii which is also a psalm of the Resurrection. The first set of psalms at lauds on weekdays retains the second psalm of the old series, the others have been changed: the second set is the same except that the *Miserere* takes the place of the first psalm. It is a characteristic of lauds that it has among the psalms canticles taken from other books of the Old Testament. We have now, since Pius X's revision, a double set of these canticles. The old set had on Sundays and feasts, the canticle *Benedicite*, in which the Three Children in the fiery furnace, marvelling at the might and the goodness of God, addressed all created beings and asked them to assist them in expressing the emotions of their hearts. It has been said of this hymn, which so sublimely expresses religious enthusiasm and zeal for the glory of God, that it is the most complete expression of universal praise;[1] it has been compared to St. Francis of Assisi's canticle to the sun. We should note that the Church bids her priests repeat these holy aspirations while returning from the altar after he has offered the holy sacrifice of the Mass. On weekdays, the old set of canticles had, on Monday, Isaias' canticle: *Confitebor tibi*; on Tuesday, Ezechias' canticle: *Ego dixi: in dimidio*; on Wednesday, Anna's canticle: *Exultavit cor meum*; on Thursday, Moses' canticle: *Cantemus Domino*; on Friday, Habacuc's canticle: *Domine, audivi*; and on Saturday, Moses'

[1] F. Ozonam, *Les Poètes franciscains*, pp. 77 and 361.

canticle: *Audite, cœli, quæ loquor.* The new set added by Pius X is no less happily chosen and is based upon ancient liturgical use. It comprises the following canticles: on Sunday, *Benedictus es, Domine, Deus patrum nostrorum,* Daniel iii. 52-57; on Monday, *Benedictus es,* 1 Paralipomenon xxix. 10-13; on Tuesday, *Magnus es, Domine,* Tobias xiii. 1-10; on Wednesday, *Hymnum cantemus,* Judith xvi. 18-21; on Thursday, *Audite verbum Domini,* Jeremias xxxi. 10-14; on Friday, *Vere tu es Deus absconditus,* Isaias xliii. 13-26; on Saturday, *Miserere nostri,* Ecclesiasticus xxxvi. 1-16.[1]

The number five, in the psalmody of lauds and vespers, has taxed the ingenuity of liturgists. They see in it an allusion to the five victims which God required daily from the people of the Jews (Numbers vii. 17, 29, 41), or to the lighted lamps of the five wise virgins in the parable (Matthew xxv. 8), or again to the five wounds of our Lord's risen body, which are the five fountains of life (Isaias xii. 3).

The capitulum of lauds represents the Epistle at Mass, of which it usually contains the beginning. There is no proper responsory, neither is there one at vespers: the hymn and the versicle may be said to take its place. The hymn varies every day; in the *Temporale,* the hymn given in the psalter is said from the octave of the Epiphany to the first Sunday in Lent, and from the octave of Corpus Christi until Advent; there is a proper hymn for Advent, Lent and Passion-tide, as well as for the great feasts: there is also a proper hymn for saints'

[1] Dom Cabrol, s.v. *Cantiques,* in the *Dictionnaire d'archéologie et de liturgie,* Vol. II, col. 1975. By the same author, *La réforme du Bréviaire et du calendrier,* Paris, 1912, p. 52.

feasts, but this as a rule is given in the common. Some hymns are historical, that is to say, they treat of the mystery which is being celebrated, or of the life of the saint: in the latter case, they are divided between matins, lauds and vespers: special rubrics regulate what changes are to be made in order not to disturb the order of the narrative.

The *Benedictus*, which is said every day, is, as it were, the crowning point of lauds: it is taken from the Gospel and transfers us from the Old Testament to the New, from the promises and figures to the reality: it celebrates in lofty language the grace of redemption and extols the office of the forerunner of Christ, St. John the Baptist. For all these reasons, it is an excellent preparation for the celebration of Mass. The final prayer, which is the collect of the Mass, sums up all the aspirations of the night office and contains their fruit: it is in two parts, one of which mentions the mystery or the feast which is being kept, the other begs some special grace in connexion with the feast.

On days when the office is semi-double or simple, the antiphon after the *Benedictus* is followed by the suffrage and some special prayers, about which we must say something because they are also found at vespers. The suffrage is an invocation or a commemoration of the Cross or of some saint: it consists of an antiphon, a versicle and a collect. The practice goes back to the ninth century in Gaul, and to the eleventh at Rome: the suffrage of the saints had become considerably extended, but Pius X reduced them to a single antiphon. During Pascal time the suffrage of the Cross only is said on semi-doubles and simples; at other seasons, the suffrage of the saints is said. The exceptions are Advent,

Passion-tide and Pascal time as we have said: this exception extends to privileged and common octaves, to a simple octave day, to Sundays and ferias on which an octave or a double is commemorated, and to the vigils of Epiphany and All Saints.

The *preces dominicales* and the *preces feriales* are prayers for different classes of persons which are said either at lauds and vespers, or at the little hours and compline. They may have originated in the fourth century, for we find in the *Apostolic Constitutions* the text of long prayers said for the bishops and clergy, the civil authorities, and for peace, for the sick, for travellers, prisoners, in short, for all the needs of the faithful and of the Church. St. John Chrysostom attests that they were said at lauds and vespers in his day:[1] these prayers are called ferial prayers, because they are said on ferias only: Pius V decreed that they should be said at lauds and vespers on ferias during Advent and Lent, on Ember days and vigils: their text, which probably dates from the ninth century, has come down to us almost unchanged. Pius X suppressed the psalms *Miserere* and *De profundis* which have found a place elsewhere in the ferial psalms, and added some versicles for the Pope, for the bishop, to be omitted during the vacancy of the see, and others for benefactors.

Besides these *preces feriales* there are those which are called the *preces dominicales*, because they extend to ordinary Sundays of the rank of semi-double and to other feasts of that rank: they are said at prime and at compline, and are a little shorter:

[1] See the *Apostolic Constitutions*, *P.G.* I, col. 735, 1086, 1138-1149.

shorter ones still are said at tierce, sext and none on the same occasions. At prime, there is the *Kyrie*, *Pater noster* and *Credo*, with a versicle asking for grace to pray aright, four versicles from the *Miserere*, the *Confitebor*, a petition for grace to spend the day well; but on ordinary ferias yet other versicles are added: *Eripe me*, etc., to ask God's mercy and to thank him. At compline, after the *Credo*, there are three versicles by way of thanksgiving, and three for the grace of spending the night well. The prayers at tierce, sext and none are *Kyrie*, *Pater noster*, and the last two versicles of the longer *preces* at lauds. It is not without reason that these prayers at lauds and vespers have been identified with the commemorations which were made at the offertory during Mass, the reading of the diptychs, traces of which survive in the *memento* of the living.

II. The Ordering of the Various Parts of the Day Office

Like the night office, the day office naturally fell into four parts which were said at the beginning of each of the four divisions of the day: prime at the first hour, tierce at the third hour, sext at the sixth hour and none at the ninth hour: this arrangement recalled the four moments of the day at which the householder in the parable went forth to hire labourers for his vineyard. The office of these little hours contains in all twelve psalms, one for each hour of the day. In practice, the Church allows these four hours to be said without a break after

the first offices of the day, since these prayers have all the same end and motive. Vespers and compline, at the end of the day, are, as it were, its crown and conclusion. We will briefly describe the content and structure of each of these hours.

(*a*) *Prime*

The hour of prime is of monastic origin, a kind of extension of lauds, and may be regarded as an excellent morning prayer, on the model of lauds. It consists of two quite distinct parts.

The first part is constructed on the same plan as the other little hours, and begins with a hymn: *Jam lucis orto sidere*, which in its five verses outlines the Christian's daily programme: the avoidance of sin, custody of the senses, offering of all his labours to God: then follow the three psalms or divisions of psalms, said under one antiphon, the capitulum, which corresponds to a lesson, the responsory, some versicles and a collect. Since Pius X's revision, there have been two sets of psalms for prime, the result of having a double set at lauds, for the psalm omitted in the second set at lauds has to be added to the psalms at prime. This emphasizes the identity of aim between the two offices: thus, at prime on Sunday, psalm cxvii is said first whenever it has not already been said at lauds; this psalm is of all others the psalm of the Resurrection. Next we have, but on Sundays only, the first four octonaries of psalm cxviii: *Beati immaculati in via*. This psalm, which is the longest in the psalter, used to supply the psalmody at the little hours every day; since the time of Pius X, it

forms the psalmody at these hours on Sundays, so that it is now said once a week only. It nevertheless has a claim on our attention because it is the psalm of the Law, or of God's will: it is wholly devoted to the praise of God's commandments, and ought to inspire us to practise them. On Sundays is added to the psalms at prime the creed called the *Quicumque*; it is said on Trinity Sunday and every Sunday after the Epiphany and after Pentecost, if the ordinary office has been said without a commemoration of an octave or of a feast of the rank of double.[1] The psalms, or divisions of psalms, at prime are now different for every day of the week. There are two capitula at prime, one to be said on Sundays, feasts and during Pascal time: *Regi sæculorum*, an act of homage to the immortal King of ages: the other is said on ferias: *Pacem et veritatem*, and bids us love peace and truth. The brief responsory which follows it, and the versicle varying according to the feast, invite us to implore God's mercy. The versicles which follow, called the *preces feriales*, are lengthened on certain days, as we explained at the end of the preceding section. Lastly, the collect, invariable at prime, is an act of thanksgiving to God and a prayer for his assistance in avoiding sin and sanctifying all our actions. There is no *Fidelium animæ* at the conclusion.

The second part of prime, which is invariable, was, in monasteries, connected with the distribution of work for the day and the abbot's injunctions: it was called the chapter office, because the monks left the church and went to the chapter-house to recite it. The Church makes all her clergy

[1] On psalm cxviii, see Bacuez, *op. cit.*, pp. 353-372.

say these prayers, except on the last three days of Holy Week and on All Souls' day. In choir this part of prime begins with the reading or singing of the Martyrology, which gives the list of saints commemorated on the following day: this reading, which takes the place of the *Fidelium animæ*, reminds us of the examples of the saints in whose footsteps we ought to walk. In recent times, the popes have urged it to be read in the private recitation of the office, for they regard it as a means of interesting the clergy in the saints of the universal Church whom it is impossible to honour specially in every place. The conclusion of this hour is the touching prayer *Sancta Maria*, which is intended to help us to imitate the Blessed Virgin and all the saints. For the same intention we say the threefold invocation to God: *Deus in adjutorium*. This is the preparation for the day's work for the accomplishment of which we recite the versicles *Respice* and the striking prayer *Dirigere*. The short lesson, preceded and followed by a blessing, is in the same key; it would be difficult to express a purer intention or to ask God's assistance in a more touching manner.

(*b*) *Tierce, Sext and None*

The arrangement of these hours in the Breviary is developed on the same plan: after the prayers at the beginning of the office, comes the hymn, the same every day, and giving the hour its character; then the psalms, three of them all under one antiphon; on Sundays, as we have said, these psalms are octonaries of psalm cxviii; Pope Pius X has

appointed special ones for every weekday. After the antiphon a capitulum, brief responsory, and versicle in place of the longer reading of the night office remind us of the maxims of Christianity which we must never lose sight of. According to one writer, the day is devoted to the active life; the night having been spent in contemplating the truths of revelation, we need time to put them into practice: St. Benedict in his *Rule*, has actually chosen the shortest psalms for these hours. As a rule, the capitula at tierce, sext and none are taken from the day's Epistle, it is one of the links which unites these hours to the Mass.[1] Then follow the *preces feriales*, of which we spoke in the preceding section, then the collect of lauds, with the usual conclusion. Certain mysteries, as we have already had occasion to say, are associated with these hours: tierce is the hour at which the Holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles, and also the hour at which our Lord was doomed to die upon the Cross; sext is the hour at which Jesus consummated his sacrifice on the Cross, and at which St. Peter had the vision about the vocation of the Gentiles; none is the hour of our Lord's death on the Cross, of his descent into hell and of the healing of the lame man by Peter and John.[2]

(*c*) *Vespers and Compline*

Vespers and compline may be said to be the evening sacrifice of the new law: the principal end of this wholly spiritual sacrifice is to thank God for

[1] Bacuez, *op. cit.*, p. 382 note.
[2] L. Hébert, *op. cit.*, p. 135 and note.

the graces received during the day, to soothe the troubled mind, to make it long for the rest of eternity. Thus, as we reflect that the declining day is like the end of our life, and the night like death, we raise our minds to another more radiant and more lasting day for which our days here on earth are a preparation. If we bear these thoughts in mind as we recite the vesper psalms, they will seem to echo the song of our risen Lord in which all the blessed in heaven unite: they will also remind us of the mystery of the Last Supper, of the night when Jesus sat at table with his disciples and instituted the Eucharist, and gave to his apostles, together with the priesthood, the power of perpetuating both these wonders. According to some authorities, the hymn which was sung as they left the supper table was psalm cxiii, *In exitu Israel*, which commemorates the departure from Egypt. And lastly, who does not like to recall the memory of the apparition at Emmaus, when at nightfall our Lord renewed before two of his disciples the mystery of the Last Supper, and made them acknowledge his Resurrection?

The office of vespers was composed on the model of lauds: there are five psalms and five antiphons, with this difference, that there is no canticle from the Old Testament in the fourth place. The vesper psalms, like those of matins, follow on one another in the order in which they occur in the psalter: on weekdays, they run from psalm cix to psalm cxliv. The psalms for feasts are usually those for Sunday with proper antiphons. As these psalms recur frequently and are more familiar to us, we must try to grasp their meaning. Their dominant idea is that of the redemption and glorification of souls in

union with our Lord. Psalm cix outlines in a few words the splendours of Jesus proclaimed by the Eternal Father, his eternal generation, his priesthood, his sacrifice, his labours, his triumph: psalm cx describes God's goodness to all his elect with whom he has made an everlasting covenant: psalm cxi is a description of the happiness of the righteous; psalm cxii sings of God's greatness and his pity for the weakness of his children whose number he is ever seeking to augment. The last psalm is more often varied: on feasts it is often psalm cxvi, a cry of thanksgiving to God for having given all a pledge of their redemption: on ordinary Sundays it is psalm cxiii, *In exitu Israel*, which recalls the departure from Egypt and the end of the oppression under which the people of the Jews laboured in that country. After the vesper psalms comes the capitulum, as at lauds, an echo of the Epistle at Mass; then the hymn and versicle which may be said to represent the gradual.

A striking feature is the *Magnificat*, a canticle without a parallel on account of the subject it celebrates, the person who composed it, and the sentiments it expresses. The Church is therefore careful to surround this chant with special ceremonies at solemn vespers, and to exact from the faithful the same marks of attention and of reverence as they give to the Gospel: the sign of the cross is made at the beginning, all stand while the canticle is being sung and the altar and the faithful are incensed. St. Ambrose of Milan wished that as they uttered these sublime words, the faithful might be filled with the same dispositions as our Lady, and glorify God and rejoice at the wonders of his goodness. The suffrage of the saints, the

preces feriales, an echo of the petitions addressed to God at the offertory of the Mass, the collect from the Mass, which once more sums up the desires of the assembly in connexion with the mystery of the day, complete the likeness between vespers and lauds, and the perfect correspondence between all their component parts.

The hour of compline, at first like prime, confined to monasteries, was at some later date adopted as the last hour of the day office in the Roman rite, and presents some changes which were not found in its original form. It is a prayer which has no equal in the liturgy. First, we have a blessing for the night, the warning expressed in the words *Sobrii estote*, taken from the first Epistle of St. Peter, then the *Pater noster*, said inaudibly, followed by the confession of sins as preparation for the night's rest. After the versicle *Converte nos*, and the *Deus in adjutorium*, comes the psalmody, three psalms under one antiphon. Pius X's revision struck out the first part of psalm xxx on Sundays, and assigned special psalms to every day in the week. The Sunday psalms, which used formerly to be repeated daily, are psalm iv, *Cum invocarem*, which bids us examine our consciences and be sorry for our sins, and tells us how to secure peaceful sleep; psalm xc, a song of trust in God's protection against the invisible enemies of our souls; psalm cxxxiii, a dialogue in which the Levites, as they relieved one another in the temple, exhorted one another to praise God. The compline hymn, only the doxology of which is variable, is a devout commentary on the psalms we have just outlined. The brief responsory *In manus tuas* is quite remarkable, as is also the canticle *Nunc dimittis* with its fixed antiphon. The

preces dominicales on semi-doubles, the *preces feriales* on ferias, put on our lips for the last time at the close of the day some of the words of the Three Children in the fiery furnace: and this, in order that the close of the day may be in harmony with its beginning: *Benedicite . . . Benedictus es. . . .* The collect suggests a last remark. This collect, *Visita quæsumus*, like the collect at the end of prime, never varies; it shows us that we ought to refer to God the beginning and the end of all our actions always and everywhere. The words: *Benedicat* of the last blessing carry our thoughts to Jacob's parting request to God after his heavenly vision: *Non dimittam te donec benedixeris mihi . . .* Gen. xxxii.

N.B.—See on p. 115 the remarks on the final antiphon to our Lady. The prayer *Sacrosanctæ*, which is found in the Breviary and is said at the end of the office, is not part of the office. That is to say, it is not obligatory. Leo X, however, attached indulgences to the recitation of this formula: the remission of the negligences and faults of frailty committed during the office. It should be said kneeling, unless infirmity forbids, even when saying the office privately: to gain the indulgence attached to it, it is sufficient to say it once a day after compline.[1]

[1] L. Hébert, *op. cit.*, p. 206, note 3.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ORDERING OF THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE BREVIARY WITH SPECIAL RELATION TO THE ANNUAL CURSUS

I. The *Temporale*; (1) the different cycles of the *Temporale* : (*a*) the Christmas cycle; (*b*) the Easter cycle; (*c*) the Pentecost cycle; (2) the characteristics of the office during these cycles. II. The *Sanctorale*.

In the recitation of the Divine Office, as in the celebration of Mass, the Church's aim is to make us share in our Lord's interior dispositions. With this end in view, she makes us contemplate in the course of the year the mysteries of his earthly life, the model and the source of grace. All this figures in the liturgical year as the proper of the time in the *Temporale*. The Church next shows us these mysteries manifested outwardly in the life of our Lady and the saints, who are also our models and our intercessors before God; therefore we have the proper of the saints or, the *Sanctorale*. These two parts have been quite separate in the Divine Office, since the Breviary was revised by Aymo in 1241. We will now see what are their chief characteristics, and how the various elements of prayer are distributed in them.

THE BREVIARY

I. The "Temporale"

The *Temporale* constitutes the original and essential part of the ecclesiastical calendar. We have to describe: (1) the different cycles of which it is composed; (2) the characteristics of the office in each of these cycles.

(1) *The Different Cycles of the "Temporale"*

Most liturgists distinguish two cycles and assign to them as pivot the two feasts of Christmas and Easter; but since the Easter cycle alone covers half the year, part of it can be cut off to form what we shall call the Pentecost cycle.

(*a*) The Christmas Cycle.—This cycle lasts from the first Sunday in Advent to Septuagesima Sunday. The four Sundays of Advent are its period of preparation: these four weeks represent the time which intervened between the fall of our first parents and the promise of a redeemer, and the realization of this promise by the coming of Christ to earth: they include the period of nine months between the Annunciation and the birth of the Son of God. The faithful are bidden to enter into the feeling of the patriarchs, prophets, and of our Lady during this long period of expectation. Christmas and the Epiphany with their respective octaves are the centre of this cycle. The weeks which follow the octave of the Epiphany are its complement: this season is more or less curtailed by the moveable cycle of Easter, but the portion cut off is carried over

to the end of the third cycle, which is proportionately lengthened.

(*b*) The Easter Cycle.—This cycle lasts from Septuagesima Sunday until Trinity Sunday. It may be divided into three phases: (1) from Septuagesima until Wednesday in Holy Week, in which we have the labours, teaching and trials of Jesus in his public life, from Septuagesima until Lent; the more rigorous penance of the forty days' fast in the desert, from the first Sunday in Lent to Passion Sunday; and lastly, the sorrowful fortnight in which the work of our redemption was accomplished, the instrument of death, the Cross, becoming the source of life, from Passion Sunday to Wednesday in Holy Week. (2) The centre of this cycle begins with the office of Tenebræ, and includes on Maundy Thursday, the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood; on Good Friday, the Passion and death of Christ; on Holy Saturday, the entombment and descent into hell. Then Easter and its joyful octave; (3) Pascal time, which forms the complement of the cycle, is like an octave of weeks of the feasts of feasts: we have in it the feast of the Ascension and its octave, then that of Pentecost with its octave, equal in solemnity to that of Easter.

(*c*) The Pentecost Cycle.—This cycle lasts from Trinity Sunday to the first Sunday in Advent: to its beginning are attached the feasts of Corpus Christi and of the Sacred Heart. In these different cycles occur the Ember days, which have a liturgy of their own: they fall during the first week of Lent and the octave of Pentecost, in the Easter cycle; and during the month of September in the Pentecost cycle.

(2) *The Characteristics of the Office During these Different Cycles*

On great feasts, the characteristic note is given by the office as a whole, by the invitatory at matins, the hymns, antiphons, lessons and responsories: it is derived from the same sources at ordinary times; and every day the characteristic note of the office depends upon the lessons from Scripture and the responsories which correspond to the lessons.

The distribution of the Scripture lessons throughout the year has been determined by an apocryphal canon which has obtained force of law. This is the canon, as it is given at the beginning of some Breviaries:

Disce per hoc scriptum quid sit, vel quando legendum,
Adventus propie vult sermones Isaiæ.
Post Natale sacrum recitat sacra lectio Paulum.
Quinque libri Moysi tibi Septua Quadraque misit.
Vult sibi scripta legi Jeremiæ Passio Christi.
Actus Apostolicus sequitur post Pascha legendus.
Hinc Apocalypsim lege, Canonicasque vicissim.
Post Pentecosten Regum liber exit in hostem.
Inde per Augustum retinet Sapientia scutum.
Per totum mensem Sapiens Salomon tenet ensem.
Cantat September Job, Tobiam, Judith, Esther.
Octobri mense Machabæa trophæa recense.
Isti Ezechiel, Daniel durabunt mense, Novembri.
Postea tu repetes bis sex in fine Prophetas.[1]

There are only two or three books of the Old Testament which are not represented in the Breviary, namely, Judges, Ruth and Esdras. The

[1] Dom Cabrol published a series of articles on the Scripture lessons in the Divine Office in the *Revue des Jeunes*, August 10, November 10, 1922, March 10, June 10, 1923.

books of Paralipomenon appear on the feast of the Dedication. It has been noted that the Divine Office contains over a thousand lessons from Holy Scripture, seven hundred and fifty of which are taken from the Old Testament.

Thus, during the Christmas cycle we read the prophecies of Isaias, the anticipated evangelist of the Incarnate Word, while the responsories, taken either from this prophet or from the Gospel read at the Mass of the Sunday, remind us of the promise of a redeemer or of the realization of the mystery of the Incarnation in Mary's womb. From Christmas until the sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, we read the Epistles of St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Incarnate Word, the most zealous preacher of his advent upon earth and the clearest exponent of the benefits mankind has derived from that coming. After the second Sunday after the Epiphany, the responsories are taken from the Psalms, and evoke our trust, love and faithfulness in God's service.

During the Easter cycle, from Septuagesima to Passion Sunday, the lessons are taken from the Pentateuch, or rather from Genesis and Exodus. They remind us of Adam's sin, the cause of our fall (Septuagesima); of the punishment by the flood from which Noe and his family were saved (Sexagesima); of the call of Abraham, the father of the believers (Quinquagesima). The first Sunday of Lent interrupts this series of lessons, and bids us in the words of St. Paul make the most of this season of penance; the lessons are taken from the second Epistle to the Corinthians. Then we have the blessing of Jacob by Isaac (second Sunday in Lent); Joseph sold by his brethren and set by

Providence over all Egypt for the salvation of his people (third Sunday in Lent); Moses called to deliver his brethren (fourth Sunday in Lent). The responsories are taken from the lessons to which they are attached, though a few are from the Gospel; this occurs in the ninth responsory on Sundays and on some ferias which have a distinctive incident, that of the Prodigal Son, for instance, on the second Saturday in Lent; or our Lord's answer to his accusers on the fourth Tuesday in Lent. On the first Sunday in Lent, the responsories are passages from the prophets inviting us to do penance: the ninth is taken from psalm xc, which is mentioned in the Gospel for that Sunday. On the ferias of Lent, the lessons are a homily on the Gospel of the Mass; they are intended to prepare the catechumens for the new life they are to receive in baptism and to incline sinners to do penance; the capitula, collects, in fact, all the proper of the liturgy at this season is directed towards the same end. During Passion-tide, the lessons are taken from the Prophet Jeremias, the prophet who has most clearly foretold the sufferings of our Lord. The first responsory on Passion Sunday is an announcement of Easter, the others are taken from the psalms, which depict the sufferings of the Messias. On Easter Day, we listen to St. Paul explaining to the Colossians the benefits of Christ's Resurrection: every day in the octave there is a homily on one of the appearances of our risen Lord, as related in the Gospel of the Mass; the responsories are a happy medley of that Gospel with the prophecies which proclaim the triumph of the Lion of the tribe of Juda. On *Quasimodo* or Low Sunday we begin reading the Acts of the Apostles, which show the

results of the Resurrection in the primitive Church, and the fervour of the first Christians: this reading continues for two weeks and is accompanied by the responsories of the octave of Easter. From the third to the fourth Sunday after Easter is read the Apocalypse of St. John, the gospel of Christ in glory, and a wonderful revelation of the kingdom he won and entered into at his Ascension; the responsories are also taken from the Apocalypse and voice the longing of the exiles for their heavenly country. During the three weeks which precede Pentecost we have the so-called Catholic Epistles of SS. James, Peter, John and Jude, which are all a homage to the risen Redeemer and to the wonderful power of his grace: they are accompanied by responsories taken from the psalms, which contain allusions to the Babylonian captivity. Then follows the great feast of Pentecost with its octave, during which we read homilies on the Gospel of the Mass; the responsories are taken from the passage in the Acts which describes the event, and which is read as the epistle.

During the Pentecost cycle, the first weeks are taken up by the books of Kings, in which the clergy find models suited to their vocation: such as Samuel, the Levite after God's own heart; Saul, chosen at first for his excellent qualities, and then rejected on account of his pride and ingratitude; David, first the shepherd of his father's flocks and then of his people, persecuted and victorious, sinner and penitent; Solomon, wise and faithful in his youth, blind and guilty in his old age. In the last two books of Kings, which open with the separation of the two kingdoms of Juda and Israel and contain some sad stories, we may discern an allusion to the schisms

and heresies which do more harm to the Church of God than the torments of her persecutors. The responsories which accompany the lessons are extracts from the most striking passages in these books, such as the death of Saul, the vocation of David, his fall and his repentance. During the month of August, the sapiential books, Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom come to strengthen the reader's faith and kindle his love; the responsories, which are also taken from these books, help to do the same. We should note that the last two books also provide the lessons and antiphons for the feasts of our Lady, in which the Canticle of Canticles is also utilized: as it is in certain commons of martyrs or of confessors. In September, the stories of Job, Tobias, Judith and Esther supply the office with magnificent examples of fortitude, justice and temperance, tested by trial and finally rewarded. In October, the books of the Machabees remind us that the present life is a continual struggle against our enemies, that God alone is our support and that in heaven only will the warrior find rest. Lastly, the month of November brings the reading of Ezechiel, Daniel and the minor prophets: by their oracles they uphold, encourage and console the Christian souls as they used formerly to console the Jews who looked for the coming of the Messias. The responsories are taken from these books, which make us read at least once a year the most noteworthy passages of our Bible. The Ember days have for their lessons a homily from the Gospel of the Mass proper to each of those days.

II. The "Sanctorale"

The liturgy assigns a place apart to the feasts in honour of our Blessed Lady. These feasts succeed one another in order throughout the year and complete the series of feasts in honour of our Lord: some of them refer to our Lord as well as to his Mother, for instance, the Annunciation, the Purification, the Visitation, the Compassion or Seven Dolours; others may be regarded as a lasting preparation for the mysteries of the God-man, for instance, the Immaculate Conception. Pius X's reform had to suppress some feasts of our Lady of secondary rank, especially those which were kept on a Sunday: a few, like those of the Holy Name of Mary and the Holy Rosary, were assigned to a fixed day in the week.

The feasts of the saints are blended with rather than linked on to the mysteries of the time with significant variety. However, they do not make us lose sight of our Lord, for it is him, and no other, whom we glorify in the saints: we congratulate them because they share the glory of their Head; we thank them, we encourage ourselves by their example, and we beg them to help us. This is the necessary consequence of the doctrine of the mystical body of Christ; the Church triumphant is associated with Jesus Christ in the sanctifying work of the Church militant, for in the last analysis, the glory of the saints comes to Jesus, the King of the apostles, martyrs, confessors, etc., as the invitatory at the beginning of their offices announces. With the exception of a few saints, like St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, etc., who have

a proper office, the others, as we have said, have had since Pius X's revision, an office composed of the ferial and saints' offices: most of them have only the collect and the lessons of the second nocturn proper; the other parts of the office not taken from the feria are from the common. At the present time these commons are seven in number: apostles, martyrs, pontiffs, doctors, confessors, virgins and holy women: these seven classes of saints supply so many different aspects under which to consider the psalms. The Breviary has two offices for apostles and martyrs: one for ordinary seasons, which celebrates their combats, virtues and merits, the other for Pascal time when the Church, full of the thought of the next world, sets herself to celebrate the glory they enjoy with their risen Lord.

In conclusion, we will explain how the commons of these seven classes of saints were formed. The first saints to receive liturgical honours were the martyrs, whose names were inscribed on the diptychs: on the anniversary of their death, regarded as the beginning of their triumph, *dies natalis*, the vigil and the Mass were celebrated over their tomb. So early as A.D. 155, St. Polycarp was thus honoured in the Eastern Church. Our common of martyrs was originally the proper office of one martyr in particular. The most ancient of these offices is said to date from the third century: it took its psalms from the Sunday office, but a few were omitted which were less directly suited to the feast of Martyrs. The lessons, antiphons, responsories were made to harmonize with the character of the martyr. In order to adapt this office to the feasts of other martyrs, the compilers merely altered a few pieces. This explains why the common

of one martyr contains so many vestiges of the proper offices of primitive martyrs. The antiphons: *Qui mihi ministrat . . . Si quis ministraverit . . .* must originally have been chosen for St. Laurence, for they allude to his function as deacon, *minister*. Similarly, the allusions to the crown, laurel, palm, victory, originally were connected with St. Stephen, St. Vincent, St. Laurence, on account of the etymology of their names. These three saints were, as a matter of fact, the first to be honoured with an official *cultus*. The apostles were originally honoured as martyrs; later they were given a proper liturgy, in which the psalms and other elements are most happily chosen. The first proper office of apostles, on which the others were modelled, seems to have been that of SS. Peter and Paul. We should also note that during Pascal time nowadays, the common of apostles and evangelists has a good many pieces which are also found in the common of martyrs for Pascal time. The common of confessors was not instituted until later: save for exceptions introduced at a later date, the psalms selected are the same as those in the common of one martyr. An old office of St. Martin of Tours has, in the third nocturn, the three psalms found in the common of martyrs. It is also thought that the hymn *Iste confessor*, used for all confessor pontiffs and confessor non-pontiffs, was originally proper to this St. Martin. The common of virgins is of still more recent origin: several of the virgin-saints, for instance, St. Agnes, St. Agatha, etc., formerly received the honours paid to martyrs, which explains why they still have nearly all the psalms assigned to the common of martyrs. The virgins who were not martyrs had psalms like those allotted to the office of

our Lady. The common of holy women only dates from the time of Clement VIII (†1605): it is the same as the common of virgins, except that the pieces in honour of virginity have been altered.

The common of the dedication of churches which follows the commons we have just mentioned, is also a composition worthy of our attention: it is inspired by the ceremony of the consecration of a church, and contains the same themes: the church is the house of God, the house of prayer, built upon the rock: it is a terrible place, the gate of heaven. It is also Jerusalem, the earthly Jerusalem with its gates, towers and walls, and the heavenly Jerusalem described in the Apocalypse. In short, whether we take the psalms, antiphons, hymns, lessons, responsories or collects, we shall find that there are few offices which are so harmoniously ordered.

The *Sanctorale*, like the *Temporale*, has its source and support in Jesus Christ, the centre and the source of all liturgies, and this is true both of the commons and of the proper parts. The apostles, the founders of the Church, who will one day be judges of the world, show their zeal and their heroic love of the Church and of souls; the martyrs, after having shared in the sufferings of Christ, share the glory of his Resurrection, a note which is specially evident in their office for Pascal time; the confessors invite us to spread abroad the teaching of the Church or to have a better understanding of our religion; the virgins offer for our imitation innocence, renunciation of the world, and intimate union with our Lord; in the holy women, we are given an example of fortitude amidst the cares and anxieties of the world.

CONCLUSION OF PART II

One thought stands out clearly in this study and we commend it to the attention of all who recite the Breviary; it is that the Divine Office is closely connected with the first part of the Mass. When we say the Divine Office, we mean not the whole body of hours only, but each of the hours in particular. Dom Cabrol had already an inkling of this idea when he wrote in his book, *Le Livre de la prière antique* (pp. 83 seq.): "The vigils and the Eucharist have always been and still are the centre of all our liturgy. The vigils form the first part of the Mass, called the Mass of the catechumens; the psalmody, the lessons, the invocation, the whole of the canonical office all issued from it. From matins were derived the other hours of the day and night, which were all built up on the same model: the psalms with their antiphons, the lessons and responsories, the canticles from the Gospel, the collects, all these gravitate around the vigil, or if you like, the Mass, and the character of the canonical hours is to be its satellites, so to say." More recent researches, like those of that ardent and fastidious scholar, Dom Cagin, a monk of Solesmes, have enabled us to emphasize the connexion between the Mass and the office, and to assert more definitely, if I may say so, the close connexion between them.

This is how Monsieur Vigourel, a fervent admirer of Dom Cagin, expresses himself on the subject: "The office, which is the spiritual setting of the sacrifice, embraces in its web all the day and night hours. The canonical hours divide the day between them, for they are said every three hours throughout the day and night. In the course of the week all the psalms are recited during these hours. The antiphons, which form a precious casket in which are set the splendid lyric poems of the psalms, give the leading ideas which determine their choice both in the ferial psalter and in that of the different feasts. The general plan of the hours is in manifold relation with that of the first part of the Mass. The psalms represent the *Gloria in excelsis*, the praise which dominates everything: the capitulum is the Epistle, the hymns and responsories are the equivalent of the gradual and the *alleluia*, the canticles *Benedictus* at lauds, *Magnificat* at vespers, and *Nunc dimittis* at compline are the Gospel, from which they are taken, and like the Gospel, are sung standing. The collect at the conclusion, after the *Dominus vobiscum*, reminds us of the eucharistic prayer, for it is offered *per Dominum Jesum, in unitate Spiritus Sancti*. Matins, with its psalms alternating with lessons, the last of which are a commentary on the Gospel, and with responsories, end with the singing of the *Te Deum*, a real anaphora without a consecration, in which praise issues in prayer." [1]

Who would not then feel that the Divine Office, far from being a heavy and sometimes wearisome burden to the priest who is bound to recite it, becomes an hourly communion with the intentions and the mysteries of the Incarnate Word, an admir-

[1] *Le Canon romain de la messe*, p. 218.

able complement of the eucharistic communion? The thoughts and affections which the recitation of the Breviary arouses in our souls become the thoughts and affections of our Lord who expresses them by our voice. We ought, then, to be punctilious and devout in its recitation. One of the most grievous privations of the priests who were deported during the French Revolution was the impossibility of offering the holy Sacrifice, and the loss of their Breviaries, their beloved means of maintaining within them the thought of heaven and the remembrance of God. When they could procure a rare copy, they used to assemble together to listen while one of them read it aloud. So great was the delight they took in those sacred words, the food of their souls, and so great their joy to unite, in their dreadful dungeons, with the prayer of Jesus, in union with the entire Church.

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